

kannaduki kou
神無月紅

イラスト
夕薙

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legend

Reiji Saeki, an ordinary boy living in rural Tohoku region, has died.
All seems to be over... Yet, he wakes up, to a vision full of glimmering white,
with a glowing sphere, floating right in front.
The sphere claims to be, an magician from another dimension,
in search of a heir to pass on the witchcraft it has perfected.
With the magical powers and a new physical existence, Reiji's adventure in Elgin,
the magical world begins...

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Legend

Arc 4 - Azoth Firm

by Kannazuki Kou

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Chapter 110

The carriage stopped before the residence of Margrave Rowlocks and its door opened, revealing Rei, Ara and Elena.

After that, from the shadow of the carriage, Set moved next to Rei.

The three of them, and Set. No, including the adventurer they had hired as a driver, the four people and one animal were greeted by Margrave Daska Rowlocks when they stepped forward.

"Elena-dono, you've come back safely. Rei as well, you've protected Elena well."

".....No, if I were stronger, I could have reduced the number of people who died."

At Rei's words, Daska looked to see who else had stepped down from the carriage.

Certainly, compared to when they left the city of Gimuru, Vel and Kuust were missing. Instead, another adventurer had joined them.

"No, in the end, I had only requested Rei to escort Elena-dono. I have no complaints as the person you were meant to escort, Elena-dono, has come back safely.Elena-dono, I would like to hear the story, but if you don't mind, would you like to go in first?"

Elena nodded at Daska's words and turned to look at the adventurer.

"Sorry, but please leave the carriage with Margrave Rowlocks. We plan to leave before the 9am bell tomorrow morning, so please be ready for that. Here is another reward separate from the request remuneration. Take a break for today."

After Elena said that, Ara handed several silver coins to the man.

"I-Is that okay? In addition to the normal remuneration....."

"It's okay. I've had to force various things on you. Go restore your energy."

"Thank you very much. Then, I will accept your offer!"

Bowing his head, the adventurer drove the carriage in the direction guided by the mansion staff. Set had already become accustomed to what he had to do and followed after the carriage.

Seeing them off, Daska guided Elena into the residence.

They then arrived at Daska's office, where he had previously discussed the request.

(.....That reminds me, I was attacked by Kuust as soon as I entered last time.)

As Rei remembered some unpleasant but vivid memories, he stood with Ara behind Elena, who sat on the sofa opposite Daska.

Since Rei had been escorting Elena due to Daska's nominated request, normally, he should have been standing behind Daska. However, because Daska hadn't announced the completion of the request, he took his position as Elena's escort.

Smiling wryly at Rei's dutifulness, Daska immediately started to talk after a maid brought in some tea.

"Now then. May I congratulate you on your safe return?"

"Yes.....that's right. Although our task was only half finished in various ways, we have achieved our goal to some extent. I could that say an unfortunate problem occurred."

".....That's a strange way of saying things. Could you explain in more detail."

Elena thought for a moment if she should tell Daska about it, but in the end, it was an event inside Margrave Rowlock's territory.

(In addition.....)

Elena turned to look at Rei, who was standing behind her. Rei was an adventurer in this city, and since he had refused her offer to join the Knights, he would remain in the city of Gimuru without a doubt. In that situation, she judged that Daska would probably find out about what happened in the dungeon in the end.

A temporary cover up story wouldn't cut it, and since he did rule this territory, Elena decided on the proper method and spoke up without anymore hesitation.

"First of all, our main purpose for this trip was the Inheritance Ceremony. In this regard, it was about 70% completed. Although it was only 70%, because the magic stone used was my family's heirloom, a magic stone of an Ancient Dragon, it was still completed successfully even with the unexpected events."

Saying that, Elena released the magic power that she had suppressed for a moment.

In that moment, a torrent of magic power gushed out, centered around Elena, causing the tea cups on the table to rattle. Daska felt daunted by the intense pressure being released by the Duke's daughter before him.

".....I can't fully control it right now, so that's how it is."

"No, that's great. It seems you have acquired quite a bit of power."

Daska replied as such. However, his back was covered in cold sweat.

Among the Knights at Margrave Rowlock's frontier territory, he had the highest sensitivity to magic power. For anyone who understood magic power, this would have caused a huge commotion.....but right now, Daska was the only one nearby.

"However, it's only 70%.You said that there were issues that lead to it being only 70%."

".....Ah. Does Daska-dono remember the subordinates I had brought along?"

"Mm. There was Kuust, who came ahead of you, and another one called Vel. Both were your subordinates and looked to be quite skillful."

"About them, Vel.....actually turned out to have links to the Bestir Empire."

".....What?"

He had links to the Bestir Empire. Hearing her explanation, Daska's expression became grim.

"Is that confirmed?"

"There's no doubt. He seems to have proclaimed it proudly himself."

".....Wait. Then Elena-dono didn't hear it yourself?"

"That's right. Anyhow, I fainted from the resulting shock after Vel destroyed the magic stone half way through the ceremony. Originally, it seems that he wanted to assassinate me as well but Rei helped me out. For that, I am grateful that Daska-dono chose Rei to be my escort."

Daska looked past Elena, who had bowed her head, to Rei, who was standing behind her.

"Rei, is what Elena-dono said true?"

"Yes. Vel had defected to the Bestir Empire."

".....Elena-dono, Duke Kerebel?"

At Daska's question, Elena nodded naturally.

"I have already informed him by letter. If we are lucky, I think it will be possible to pursue Viscount Sails, Vel's family, before they escape the Mireana Kingdom.....this depends on the speed of my father's actions."

"Is that so. Then I have nothing to say. But from the Nobles Faction..... moreover, since it was Viscount Sails, who was close to Duke Kerebel, who defected to the Empire, it will be a very awkward situation....."

"I think my father will lose some cohesion in the faction, that can't be avoided. However, should I say that there is a bright side to this unfortunate case, it is already autumn. Even if the Bestir Empire decides to go to war, it will probably be next spring. I would like to believe there is time to reconsider our situation."

".....Isn't there a possibility that they will move quickly for a decisive battle between autumn and winter?"

"I considered that possibility as well. However, so far, the Bestir Empire has never fought a war in winter and above all, their soldiers wouldn't be able to keep advancing through the snow. If they did, it would be a small number specialising in sabotage.....even if it's the best of the Bestir Empire, in small numbers, we can deal with them."

"....."

After listening to Elena's story, Daska considered something in his mind before giving a small nod.

"I understand. I'll make some preparations to be able to respond immediately if anything happens."

".....Is that alright? This is a fight that has come about due to my Nobles Faction. For Daska-dono who is in the Neutral Faction....."

At Elena's words, Daska shook his head.

"Certainly, there's a power struggle occurring between the Royalists, Nobles

and Neutral Factions. However, even if there is a power struggle, we have to consider the Mireana Kingdom. At the very least, I don't intend to go over to the Bestir Empire."

".....Sorry."

"What, don't mind it.However, if the situation was as you said, it was good that the adventurer I sent this time was Rei. If it were an ordinary rank B or rank C adventurer, they would have been taken out by Vel."

"Ah. In that respect, I am thankful to Daska-dono for sending Rei."

As he nodded at Elena's words, there was a knock on the door and the butler came in.

"Master, the rooms have been prepared."

"Thanks for your hard work. Elena-dono, you must be tired from your travels today. There is a bath available."

"I will accept Daska-dono's kind offer then. Ara, let's go."

"Yes, Elena-sama."

As Elena and Ara left the room, Rei was going to follow, but a voice called out to stop him.

"Rei, please stay. There's some things I want to talk about."

".....I understand. Then, Elena-sama, I will stay here."

As expected, it wasn't possible for him to talk with her casually before Daska. Rei spoke to Elena in polite language, as he had used when they first met.

Although Elena seemed to have a lonely expression for a moment as she looked at Rei, it was only for a moment. She immediately nodded and spoke up.

"Umu~. Rei, thank you for your help this time. If you weren't there, I probably would have been killed by Vel in the dungeon and wouldn't have come back. I am proud to have worked with an adventurer like you."

".....Although various things happened, I thank Rei-dono from the bottom of my heart. Also, suddenly attacking you when we first met.....I'm sorry for that."

Following after Elena, Ara said that before bowing her head and walking out the room.

As Rei saw them leave, he finally realised that the request had been

completed.

"Rei, I would also like to thank you. You have protected Elena well."

"No. If I had seen through Vel's identity earlier....."

"Don't worry about it. A person's true character isn't something you can easily see through. Ah, here. No need to stand there, take a seat. It's hard to talk if you're standing."

"Then, I'll accept your offer."

Rei gave a small bow to Daska and sat down on the sofa.

"So, onto the main subject....."

Daska had a somewhat guilty look as he started to speak.

"Considering the importance of this request, normally, I could list this as a reasonable achievement for you to rank up to rank C. That is no mistake. But....."

"This request can't be made public, is it."

".....Frankly speaking, yes. Although I'm sorry, I'll have to ask you to keep the contents of the request a secret for some time."

"To be more specific, is it about Vel's betrayal?"

When Rei asked bluntly, Daska nodded with a bitter expression.

"That's right. A viscount isn't a particularly high ranking noble, but a noble is still a noble. To make matters worse, Viscount Sails was well known as one of Duke Kerebel's aides. If such a person betrayed the country, intense unrest would spread."

"But, wouldn't the Bestir Empire announce that extensively?"

"They certainly will. However, it won't be such a problem if steps have been taken to reduce the unrest from the other nobles. It's just a problem of a matter of time."

"I understand. I will not speak about the matters of this request until Margrave Rowlocks gives me permission."

".....Sorry about this. Because of that, I have to freeze the achievements of the request for a while so you don't attract too much attention. However, I promise to repay that as soon as I can.As for what I can do now, I can add a little something to the reward."

Reward, Rei recalled that it had been two platinum coins.

"I agree. If the compensation is increased, there won't be any problems. I will accept that."

"Thanks."

After that, Rei reported about the dungeon, the level of alchemy in the Bestir Empire and other things as he spoke for about 30 minutes.

"Then, I apologise but it's about time I have to leave."

As he said that, he turned to look out the windows, which had already dimmed. It would usually still be bright in summer, a sign that autumn was coming.

"That's right. I seem to have said this many times, but you've truly saved me this time with this request. Rei, I wonder what would have happened if you weren't at rank D."

"That's true, should I say."

"Haha, you're quite confident. Well, that is good for an adventurer.Ahh, you should come out tomorrow when Elena leaves to send her off properly."

"I understand, 9am tomorrow morning was it?"

"It seems to be so.Well, thank you for your hard work."

Hearing those words, Rei left the office and returned with Set to the inn to relieve their fatigue from the trip and fell asleep in the bed earlier than usual.

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Chapter 111

".....Hmm.....ahh....."

In a room in the Dusk Wheat inn, Rei groaned as he tossed around in his bed.

After a few minutes, he started to get up slowly as the 6am bell rang throughout the city.

"Fuahhhh~.....I slept well. Or should I say, I've overslept."

Even for Rei, a the request to escort Elena had piled up quite a bit of fatigue on him. After returning to the inn last night, he had eaten an early dinner before going straight to bed.

"For now, today's schedule is to see Elena off.....speaking of that, I haven't distributed the monsters that I stored into the Misty Ring, I should get going earlier to sort that out."

He suddenly remember the countless monsters that they had killed in the dungeon and turned his eyes to the Misty Ring, which was on his right wrist.

".....Alright! It's a little early, but I'll go to the Margrave's residence after finishing breakfast."

Muttering, he quickly got dressed before walking down to the dining room on the first floor of the inn.

"Oh, you're early today, aren't you."

As Rei went to the dining room on the first floor, he was greeted by Lana, the proprietress of the Dusk Wheat inn.

"Ah. I have a small errand to run. I would like to order breakfast/"

"I understand. Please take a seat where you like while you wait."

As expected, the mornings were busy and Lana only exchanged a short greeting with him before quickly heading into the kitchen. After being told that, Rei took a seat to his right and waited. Lana came back not long after and arranged his breakfast on the table. There was a rye bread bun, ham steak, potato salad, a slightly sour soup and some watered down wine. Considering

the time that would be required to prepare all that, it once again convince Rei that the Dusk Wheat inn was a high class accommodation.

He ate his breakfast slowly for about 30 minutes before going to the stables to pick up Set.

"Set-chan, take a look at this. Try eating some."

"Gururu~"

For some reason, he found the figure of a familiar female fencer there, both her hands full of food that she was giving to Set one after the other.

".....Milein."

Yes, the female fencer was Milein, the leader of the rank C party Scorching Wind.

"Ah, Rei. Good morning."

".....Good morning. Still, you found out that we had come back pretty fast."

"Ahahaha, what are you talking about. Set is so noticeable that he's already become a topic of conversation.It's a bit sad though. If I had come back a little earlier, I could have met Set yesterday."

"Haa, you're the same as ever."

"That's right. It hasn't been more than a month since I last met Set? I won't change that much."

While embracing Set's fur coat, Milein continued talking with Rei.

"You could have at least met with me first though."

"Ahahaha. If you were older than me, I might have considered that. You see, I prefer older guys."

As she spoke to Rei, she was still looking at Set, smiling as she fed him meat skewers, fruit and a bowl of meaty soup.

".....You've saved me the trouble of feeding Set, but do you have the money?"

Rei remembered that when he had taken the rank up test, she had gone out with Set on subjugation requests to make some income. However, she nodded, indicating that there were no problems.

"Originally, we were out of money because we replaced all our equipment

after the Orc incident. After that, we managed to get out of that state thanks to Set-chan. Right now, I'm living a nice comfortable life."

"I see. Ah, Set, what do you want to do? I'm going off to see Elena now, do you want to stay here with Milein?"

"Guru~.....Gurururu~!"

Set was troubled for several seconds before quickly nodding and coming out of his spot.

By the way, before they left for the dungeon, the other horses and animals in the stables had become accustomed to Set. But while they were away, the mercenary group that owned those horses and animals had already left the inn. As the inn received new guests and customers, the horses and other animals in the stables were also replaced with new ones. Because of that, whenever Set appeared, they would all quiet down.

There were a few remaining animals from before, who acted relaxed as if it didn't concern them at all.

"So, as I thought, I'm still no match for Rei."

At Set's actions, she turned to look at Rei enviously.....no, Milein looked at him with something like a glare.

"One day.....I will make Set only focus on me!"

With that, she left the stables while pretending to cry.

".....What is she trying to do."

Even while amazed at the situation, Rei was thankful to Milein. When they had gone for the Orc subjugation, thanks to Milein taking the initiative to become familiar with Set, Set also became more comfortable among the subjugation corps. At the same time, he started to become widely accepted even in the city of Gimuru.

"Gururu~?"

What's wrong, Set seemed to ask. Smiling, Rei rubbed Set's head as they left the stables. As originally planned, they started towards the Margrave's residence.

"Ah, it's Rei. I had heard that you came from your request, it looks like that was true. Things as usual for you?"

"Rei, I heard that you came back, get some skewers. Please buy some."

"I made a new sandwich to sell. Would you like to try it?"

As he walked through the streets with Set, the street vendors frequently asked him things related to food. Set would show interest in them and Rei would buy them before they continued as usual while eating.

Although Rei had just eaten breakfast and Set had been fed various food by Milein, Set was still delighted to stuff himself with the delicious food that Rei gave him.

"Gurururu~"

Set gave a happy cry as he ate a sandwich containing grilled Fang Boar meat and crisp leafed vegetables, seasoned with a sweet and sour sauce

Seeing Set like it, the stall owner looked on with a somewhat relaxed expression.

With a wry smile, Rei paid for the food.

Like that, the two of them continued down the road with their usual interactions.

However, as they got closer to the Margrave's residence, the number of stalls also started to decrease. Instead, the figures of soldiers, guards and knights started to stand out.

Naturally, as a result.....

"You over there, only the Margrave's residence is ahead, do you have any business there?"

Such questions started being asked.

Although he was at a loss on how to answer, Rei didn't feel that the soldier in front of him was trying to give him a hard time. Rather, although Set wore a Necklace of Subservient Monster around his neck, the fact that man, who was frightened by the 2m long Griffon, still carried out his duties gave him a sense of security. Anyhow, Margrave Daska Rowlocks was a central figure among the

Neutral Faction. Naturally, some of his opponents would throw obstacles at him to make things difficult for him. Because of that, there was never a case of being too cautious.

"Hey, he's fine."

When Rei was about to speak, another soldier unexpectedly came up from behind the soldier who was questioning him.

"Why?"

"Haven't you heard about this guy? An adventurer followed by a Griffon. He has a low ranking of rank D, but I've heard his abilities are rank A. It seems the Margrave nominated him for a request because of that. You're coming because of that, aren't you?"

"Well, that's not wrong."

"See?"

"If you say so, then there shouldn't be any issues.You may pass."

"Thanks."

Thanking the two soldiers, as he moved on with Set towards the Margrave's residence, a fortress like building came into view.

A soldier who was acting as a gatekeeper in front of the residence turned his eyes to Rei and Set as they approached the gate.

Although Rei had already come to the Margrave's residence several times and they had already become familiar with each other, as evidence of them being elite soldiers, he wasn't careless with his duties.

"Do you have some business with the Margrave?"

As soon as he arrived before the gate, the gatekeeper asked, but Rei shook his head.

"No, I would like to meet with Elena Kerebel-sama. I have to give her some things that were agreed on during the escort request. I would like to sort that out before she leaves."

"I understand, please wait for a moment."

As expected, when talking with the gatekeeper, Rei couldn't call Elena without any honourifics.

About 10 minutes later after the gatekeeper left for the mansion, Rei and Set were still waiting in silence, somewhat uncomfortably.

No, to be exact, only Rei was feeling uncomfortable. The new gatekeeper stood in silence on the spot, his facial expression hardly changing. Set just yawned comfortably.

(.....Am I the strange one?)

When he asked himself that question, the previous gatekeeper finally came back.

"Elena-sama is waiting. I will guide you to her."

Along with the gatekeeper was the familiar figure of Ara. On her back was the Power Axe that had been handed to her by Rei. Rather than a knight, she gave off the impression of a warrior.

(Well, she's a strange person to use an axe as a knight.)

"I understand.Ah, could you take Set to the stables?"

At Rei's words, glancing at Set, who was yawning carelessly, the gatekeeper gave a small nod.

"I don't mind. He won't bite, will he?"

"That won't happen. There won't be any problems unless you try to do something strange to him."

"Leave it to me."

"With that, please wait for a bit."

"Gururu~"

As Rei said that to Set, Set replied with a cry.

After stroking Set's head roughly at the end, Rei went to Ara, who was waiting for him in front of the mansion.

"Rei-sono, good morning. It's early, there are still quite a few bells before the 9am bell."

"No, I forgot that there is something I need to check with Elena."

"Elena-sama? Well, if it's Rei-dono, there are no issues. Elena-sama is waiting in the room."

As they walked along, they reached a room with luxurious doors.

".....The door to the office as well, is Margrave Rowlocks a door fanatic?"

Ara smiled at Rei's unintentional murmurs.

"That's probably part of the reason, but I think it's because this is a room to accommodate VIP guests.Elena-sama, it's Ara. I've brought Rei-dono."

"Mm, come in."

After Elena's voice was heard from inside the room, Ara opened the door.

The first thing he saw was the various furniture items, that all seemed expensive. From the ceiling, a chandelier, that seemed to be a magic item, hung down. The walls in the room were made of a seamless glossy stone, like marble. Even the carpet laid in the room, when stepped on, would sink down several cm. In addition, the tables, chairs and sofas, even if Rei wasn't familiar with such items, he could still tell at a glance that they were of a high class.

"There's still another two hours before we depart. You've come very early.Well, that's fine. I've finished all my preparations for departure and have some idle time. Please sit down, let's talk."

Guided by Elena, he sat down on a sofa.

It was like the sofa for visitors that was in Daska's office.....no, it was surprisingly softer as Rei sank further down after it received his weight. Elena smiled.

"Because this room is for important people to stay, even if this sofa is placed here, it isn't strange. Perhaps when nobles of higher standing than Daska-dono come, they will be shown in here."

"I guess this is the vanity of nobles. Well, as for why I came today.....we haven't decided on what to do with the monsters we killed before we got to the dungeon and afterwards in the dungeon."

"Mmm, that is true. After leaving the dungeon, we were busy with so many things that I had forgotten about it."

At Elena's words, Rei agreed with her.

Rei aside, Elena had went through the betrayal and death of companions she

had worked with for years. It had been necessary for her to inform her father, Duke Kerebel, and she also had to check up on the power that she had inherited from the Ancient Dragon through the Inheritance Ceremony.

If anyone were to be blamed for forgetting about the monsters, it would have to be Rei, who was the most relaxed out of all of them.

"Goblin monsters aside, there are Lizardmen, a Lizardman General, Water Monkeys, the rare species Water Monkey, an Ogre, a Spriggan, Emerald Wolves and so on. There are quite a few monsters with special qualities."

"That reminds me, after speaking with Rei-dono, I'm surprised by the number of monsters we killed.Well, because it's a dungeon, the quality and quantity sounds about right."

Ara, who was sitting next to Elena, muttered.

Normally, Ara would have stood behind Elena as her escort, but Elena wasn't as cautious around Rei. Ara also felt a sense of familiarity with Rei, an attitude completely different from the first time they had met, where she had slashed at him without waiting for an answer after her question.

"That reminds me. That said, I have already decided what to do with them."
"Elena?"

"This time, we have inconvenienced Rei in various ways. Without Rei, I probably wouldn't be able to drink tea here like this now. This isn't a substitute for the reward, but you may take all the monsters that have been stored in your item box."

TLN: Pardon me for asking this, but Elena, what about Kuust's body? You haven't forgotten that right?

Elena spoke those words as if it were nothing.

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Chapter 112

".....Are you sure?"

Sitting on the sofa, Rei unconsciously stopped drinking his tea and asked Elena.

He had just been told that all the monsters they had killed on the way to the dungeon and in the dungeon would be given to him as a reward.

"There are no issues. In the first place, we have don't have the means to sell all the magic stones and proofs of subjugation."

(I see, come to think of it, I did here that that was usually left to Vel.)

He nodded in his mind, but still spoke out his question?

"Certainly you don't have any connections on hand to sell through, But still, wouldn't I be taking unfair advantage of you if I took it all because you can't sell it? If it comes down to it, you could ask the coach driver."

"That is true. However, we have given you much inconveniences this time. This is what I can give you.....ah, no. Rather, I still have one more thing."

".....Elena?"

Rei asked Elena after hearing her mutter as if she had thought of something, but Elena shook her head as if it were nothing.

"Anyway. For me, I think it would be fine if we gave you all the monsters this time. Although you may have forgotten, for now, I hold the position of a Duke's daughter. Even as a soldier, I have received much fame. I'm not concerned about money, I even have reputation as the General Princess."

"Well, if Elena is fine with it, I have no complaints."

Seeing that there were no complaints, she gave a nod and elegantly carried the the cup of tea to her mouth.

".....Ara, sorry, but I would like another cup of tea. Something a bit lighter."

"Ah, yes. I will prepare it immediately."

At Elena's words, Ara bowed her head and went out the small room.

As Elena saw Ara off, she waited for door to the room to close before turning her eyes to Rei.

".....Elena?"

"Rei, I'm sorry.....but if you could lend me your ear for a minute.....yes, please pay attention."

"What, all of a sudden? Ah, well, I don't mind."

While wondering, he got up from his sofa and sat next to Elena. He waited for what she had to say.

"....."

As he waited for several seconds, he started to feel suspicious of Elena, who stayed silent, and turned around to look at her.....

Unexpectedly, Elena's hands grasped his cheeks and forced his face to look at her.

Originally, this would have been impossible given Rei's physical abilities, but now, although incomplete, Elena had inherited the power of an Ancient Dragon. Magical power aside, in terms of pure physical strength, there wasn't much difference between them. Rei was taken by surprise and didn't offer any resistance as his face was suddenly turned to towards Elena.

.....However, Elena still didn't have full control over her strength. Even now, if it hadn't been Rei, the person would have suffered from whiplash.

"Hey, I-....."

At that sudden action, Rei couldn't utter a single thing until the end. The reason was because Elena's lips had covered Rei's.

TLN: Achievement Get! What's next on the bucket list? Also, not sure if Rei just took first base, or Elena took first base.

"....."

At that sudden action, Rei's eyes widened. However, Rei didn't dislike Elena. When her beautiful face, which was now dyed red, entered his eyes, he accepted her lips without resisting.

Her lips were soft ad somewhat cool. Maybe it was her body odour or

perfume, a unique citrus scent could be smelled. However, the fragrance surrounded Rei without any discomfort.

He wondered how long their lips would stay like this. It was Rei's first kiss since he was born, at the same time, it was with a beautiful woman like Elena. This was the only reason he could accept it right now.

Soon, their lips quietly separated and silence dominated the room.

Although it had just been a kiss on the lips, Rei was born in the countryside and was a novice at such things. With the position of a duke's daughter, although there were opportunities to come across such knowledge, Elena had absorbed herself in honing her martial skills to the point where she became known as the General Princess. Because of that, it had been the first time for either of them.

"B-Because that was my first kiss, that should be enough as a reward!?"

TLN: Elena is probably not a tsundere, she just doesn't fully understand what she decided to do lol

Although Elena said that in an overbearing manner, she was the same as before.....no, her face was redder compared to the usual whiteness of her skin, making the redness more conspicuous.

"Ah.....that is, yes. Well."

Rei was also Rei, because it was his first experience of kissing someone, he had no choice but to tell himself that was the reason.

Originally, back in Japan, Rei had enjoyed reading manga and light novels and had knowledge about such situations. However, now that he had experienced it, it seemed that there were a lot more things to consider.

With that reply, the room fell into silence again. Whether she wanted to avoid that or not, Elena spoke up again.

"T-That's good. Don't think that I am a woman who would give my lips to anyone. Rei, I only permitted such an act because it was you."

"That is.....ah, I don't know what to say....."

Rei fumbled for the right words, his face just as red as Elena's.

"No, you don't have to say anything. Rather, don't say anything!"

Remembering what she had done, Elena's face went bright red.

Then, a few minutes after they had returned to their former seats and sat facing each other in an uncomfortable silence, there was an abrupt knock on the door.

With exaggerated surprise, the both of them turned to look at the door.

"Elena-sama, there were only biscuits....."

Saying that as she entered the room, Ara brought in some biscuits on a silver plate.

However, as expected, because Ara adored Elena, there was no way that she didn't notice the delicate atmosphere in the room and spoke up.

"Uhh, this atmosphere.....haa, Rei-dono, this you do something to Elena-sama?"

Ara directed a sharp gaze at Rei. Though Ara had been absent for only a short time, her beloved Elena-sama had gone red in the face and kept glancing at Rei. She was different from the usual dignified Elena-sama.....no, that was why the current situation was unbelievable. Yes, because she looked like a maiden who had fallen in love.....

Thinking that in her mind, she shook her head in a hurry.

"Rei-dono? Is there something you should tell me?"

"N-No. There's nothing in particular....."

While fumbling for the right words, he looked at Elena without thinking. And Elena being Elena, when she saw Rei looking at her, her cheeks went red again.

".....Rei-dono. You have certainly helped us out in the dungeon many times, I am also grateful that you gave me the Power Axe. But if you use that as a pretext to make moves on Elena-sama....."

Gently, Ara reached for the Power Axe on her back. She was ready to slash at Rei at any time.....

"Wait, Ara. Rei hasn't done anything to me!"

As expected, although the situation was awkward and her face was still red, Elena called out to Ara in a sharp voice.

"But Elena-sama....."

"Too many words. I have said myself that nothing has happened. Do you have anything more to say?"

".....Did nothing really happen?"

"Umu~.If anything, I was the one who did something."

The latter half was only murmured, but fortunately, Ara didn't seem to have heard it.However, Rei had sharper senses than ordinary people and heard everything she said.

Although somewhat reluctant, Ara was convinced and placed the plate of biscuits on the table before sitting next to Elena.

However, it probably wasn't just Rei's imagination and her looks towards him became sharper.

After that, there weren't any particular topics to talk about and as the time for departure grew near, they all decided to head for the entrance of the residence.

"Ah, you're right on time. I was thinking about getting someone to call you."

As they walked out to the front entrance, Daska, the main resident of the building, said that as he turned to meet the three of them.

Next to Daska was the carriage used by Elena. The adventurer she had hired to drive it was already sitting in his seat.

After loading Kuust's body into a coffin, which was also a specialised magic item, he placed the water magic spear that Kuust had used beside it.

TLN: Oh good, they didn't forget about Kuust lol

"Even so, Rei is quick with the girls. Did you have a secret date with the Duke's daughter, Elena-dono, this morning?"

Hahaha, Daska asked them while laughing.

As the person himself would have said, he was only teasing Elena and Rei, but the timing was bad.

As soon as he heard those words, Rei turned away. Elena's cheeks went red and Ara went into bloodthirsty state.

"H-Haa? That's impossible....."

".....No, Daska-sama. Nothing has happened so don't mind it."

As Ara told with that with a smile, there was no room to say anything else.

"Guru~?"

As if ignoring the atmosphere, Set appeared.

".....Set?"

"Ah, ahh. I called him over. This fellow challenged the dungeon along you, so he has the qualifications to see you off."

Daska gathered himself due to the appearance of Set.

Elena also looked at Set and returned to her usual calm expression.

"Set, you really helped us out a lot this time. If you weren't there, perhaps we would have been overwhelmed by the troop of Water Monkeys. Thank you for helping us."

"Gurururu~"

Elena smiled as she stroked his head and Set gave a cheerful cry.

Ara saw that and finally stopped releasing pressure before approaching Set.

"It is as Elena-sama said. You've been a big help."

Ara held out some dried meat in her hands and Set picked it up in his beak as he gave a happy cry.

"Haha, looking at him like this, he's cute enough that you wouldn't think he was an A rank monster."

"That is really true. He is so friendly that you wouldn't believe how bravely he fights in battle."

"Really, Griffons really are amazing."

Interested in Elena and Ara's words, Daska chimed in.

Unsurprisingly, it seems he didn't care about the strange atmosphere that had been around earlier.

"I see. I think that if Set and Rei work together, they won't fall short of an A rank party."

".....Heh~"

Hearing some good information, Daska just smiled.

After meeting with Set, Elena and Ara went towards Daska.

"If Daska-dono hadn't sent Rei as my escort, I probably wouldn't have come back from the dungeon.Rei did his role well. Even though it was difficult for Daska-dono, I cannot thank you enough."

Awkwardly, he had been limited to selecting a D rank adventurer due to Vel's work behind the scenes. This was understood by Rei as well.

Elena and Daska shook hands while Ara gave a deep bow.

"As Elena-sama said, Rei has helped a lot. I would like to thank Margrave Rowlocks for your good eyes."

Seeing the two of them like that, Daska smiled.

His smile was different from when he had heard about Rei and Set's abilities earlier, it wasn't a smile as if he were planning something, but rather, a plain and simple smile.....furthermore, it was a manly smile.

"Don't worry about it. If Elena-dono had died in my territory, there would be a variety of things I would have to do. I did it completely in good faith."

"Nevertheless, I would like to thank you because it is a fact that I was saved because of it."

"It's not a bad thing to be able to make the Nobles Faction owe the Neutral Faction a favour."

While saying so, Daska grasped the hand presented by Elena.

And finally, Elena and Ara came to Rei.

".....We have truly been taken care of by Rei. Regarding the matter of Kuust's body, if Rei hadn't been there, it would have been impossible to return it to his family. Someday, I would like you to come visit my place if you have the chance. At that time, I will welcome from my position as the successor to Duke Kerebel."

"Rei-dono, I will make use of this Power Axe."

"Ahh, both of you stay well. I will rush over if a war breaks out."

"That's right, if Rei and Set are there, no matter how powerful they are, I feel we have a chance of competing against the Bestir Empire."

Elena smiled at Rei's words. Ara felt that Elena's smile now held the charm of a girl, unlike her previous smiles, but she only watched their interaction without saying anything.

"Well then.....stay well."

"Ah. Elena too."

".....Mm? When did the two of them reach the point where they could talk with each other like this? This wasn't the case yesterday."

"-!? Ah, no. This is....."

"Daska-sama, Elena-sama and Rei-dono understood that they could trust each other after overcoming crises. Elena-sama told Rei-dono that he doesn't have to use honourifics with her."

Ara spoke out as if to protect Elena, who was fumbling for the right words. Daska thought of something and smiled back as he spoke.

"I see, I see. It seems you've won the trust of Duke Kerebel's daughter, the renowned General Princess. As expected of you, Rei."

".....Thank you very much."

Rei bowed his head at Daska with a wry smile after Ara's follow up.

"Elena-sama, we had better depart soon. We have spent too much time here....."

"Mmm, that is so.Rei."

When Rei looked at her after she spoke, Elena took a step forward and whispered into his ear.

"I gave you my first kiss. The price of a girl's lips is never cheap."

Shortly after telling him that, she quickly entered the carriage, leaving behind the unique scent of her body odour mixed with perfume that he had felt when they had kissed.

"Then, excuse us. I truly thank you for this time."

Finally, Ara said that before the carriage departed from Margrave Rowlock's residence towards the city.

.....As Rei left, his cheeks were still dyed slightly red.

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Chapter 113

"Ahh.....I screwed up."

Rei unconsciously murmured as he walked through the city. Next to him was the figure of Set, as usual.

After sending Elena off, he was interrogated by Daska, the lord of Gimuru, in various ways. However, Rei managed to escape from the residence somehow after obtaining the document of request completion and was now walking around the city with Set.

Normally, he would go to the guild to hand over the document for a reward, but it was only just past 9am in the morning. Even if he went to the guild now, it would be a hard to collect his reward if he was caught in the crowd of adventurers who were picking up requests in the guild. He decided it would be easier to kill some time and head into the guild after the congestion had died down.....and was wondering how to spend his time now.

"Well, what should we do? I don't have enough time to strip materials or to rest at the inn."

"Gururu~"

Set eyed Rei and gave a cry of agreement as they walked through the city when they saw the shadows of several appeared.

If it had been just a few people, he would have just passed them by. However, there were four boys around the age of 15, about Rei's age, surrounding a kid about 10 years old. Rei unintentionally stopped to take a look.

In the city of Gimuru, there were many rough adventurers. The number of people who would use their strength to bully others were not few. And as children were brought up seeing the behavior of the adults, it was natural that they would be affected by those actions. Those boys were one of those children, but their greatest misfortune was that Rei had time to spare. Normally, if he had seen a child being brought into a back ally, he would have ignored it, but for Rei who currently wanted to kill some time, it was a suitable reason.

"Set, shall we take a look?"

"Guru~"

Maybe Set was also feeling leisurely, he gave a cry as he deftly ate the meat off a Big Boar skewer that had been cooked by Rei.

"Now then, well, its following the usual pattern.....that child would really be a secret child of a noble or an important merchant, or such kinds of development.....I guess."

TLN: Rei is genre savvy, but will the author stick to tropes?

He looked at the four boys and the young kid. Their clothing was like those of the ordinary citizens around the area and they didn't look like they were here for any reason in particular.

No, there may have been various reasons, but it all seemed like child's play to Rei, who had just experienced much larger things, like the betrayal of Viscount Sails to the Bestir Empire.Although, it should be said that Rei himself appeared to be around the same age as the boys he was looking at.

Rei went forward while making sure they couldn't see him. Even at the current distance, it wasn't difficult for Rei to overhear their conversation with his sharpened senses.

"Fis, have you brought the thing?"

"....."

"Hey, answer when we ask you."

".....No."

"What?"

"I told you I didn't bring it! Who would listen to what you guys say!"

"Guh!"

The kid that was surrounded by the four boys smacked the belly of the boy who had been talking to him earlier with a 20cm long iron bar. Quickly pulling the iron bar back, he swung it towards the side of the boy who was next to him.....

"Whoops, that's dangerous."

Before the iron bar could make contact, the kid's hand was held down and his

movements stopped.

The first attack had been so sudden that it had succeeded. However, as long as his arms were held down, it wasn't difficult to restrain a 10 year old boy.

(Even so, he's strangely skilled.)

Rei murmured as he thought over the current events.

Of course, he wasn't as skilled as an adventurer. However, his build as clearly different from those who had grown up in ordinary households, he seemed to have some experience.

(Well, maybe he had received some training from a family member or an adventurer he knows.)

"Gururu~?"

Should we leave them as they are? Set seemed to asked as he tilted his head.

Giving a small nod, he took the skewers that Set had eaten earlier.

"Shit, acting dirty and making a surprise attack! I will put you in your place!"

The boy who had been struck in the belly stood up and tried to kick the face of the kid who was now being held down.....

Zing~!

That moment, the skewer that Rei threw grazed the boy's cheek before piercing deeply into the brick wall of a house behind him.

".....Eh?"

The boy gently touched his cheeks, not realising what had happened. His cheek had a scratch several cm long and blood stuck to his palm.

"W-Who is it!"

The boy who cried out wasn't the one who was trying to kick the kid, nor was it the one holding the kid down. It was one of the remaining two boys.

"Hm? Ah, it was me.....is it a problem?"

Saying that, Rei appeared behind them. However, Set couldn't be seen. He decided that if Griffon appeared here, it would cause a big stir. Set himself was

waiting quietly in the shade a short distance away.

"O-Of course it is. Suddenly doing such a thing!"

The person who had appeared was about the same age as them. Or so the boy, who was taller, thought as he aggressively shouted back. However, the last boy was stunned when he saw the skewer that had pierced into the bricks.

Normally, it would be impossible for an ordinary wood skewer to pierce into bricks. Because he knew that, he couldn't understand how it had happened.

(.....It went well.)

Rei thought in his mind. He had thrown the skewer with magic power. Normally, if it wasn't a special metal that could hold magic power, even if you poured magic power into an item, it would soon dissipate. But because it had been thrown after Rei had pushed his massive amount of magic power into, the result was that it pierced into the brick wall, an unexpected result.

"Hm, what did they say at such times. Ah, yes, that's it. Seeing injustice and not acting shows a lack of courage, or something."

TLN: Rei is pretending to act like a webnovel character.....except.....he is a webnovel character

"Haa? Don't tell me you don't understand the situation. What, you trying to pick a fight us?"

"No, I'm just killing time."

To not act after seeing injustice shows a lack of courage. In other words, although a person knows what is right, if they have no courage, they wouldn't try to do it.....but though he said that plainly.

The boy thought that Rei was making fun of him. The boy who had been holding the kid released him and stepped forward.

"You know, as you can see, we are busy. I'm sorry but you're in the way, could you please disappear? You wouldn't want to get hurt would you?"

"Hmm.....20 points I guess."

"Haa? What are you talking about....."

The boy tried to say something, but by the time he noticed, Rei's fist was

already in front of his face. To that boy, it was just a moment. No, the moment the fist appeared before his face, that moment seemed to last forever.

"If you're skilled, you now know the difference in strength between us. Do you still want to fight?"

"-!?"

The boy took a breath as he clenched his fist while hesitating to try to hit Rei. He understood that the boy with the robe in front of him wasn't bluffing and was stronger than the four of them.

.....Even so, because Rei had made the difference in strength clear.

".....What will you do?"

"-! Let's go!"

"H-Hey! What's with you. He can't do anything to us just by himself!"

"Who cares, just go!"

As the boy spat that out, the boy who had been scratched by the skewer and the boy who had seen the skewer pierce into the brick wall followed after him. Maybe the last boy thought he wouldn't stand a chance if he was by himself, he spat on the ground before following the others.

"Well, this was expected.Hey, are you okay?"

Seeing the four people leave, Rei turned his eyes to the kid on the ground.

"....."

However, the kid stood up quietly without saying anything and brushed the dust off his clothes before looking at Rei.

"Onii-chan, you're strong."

"Hm? Ahh, I guess so. I'm an adventurer right now, so I'm strong enough that I won't lose to people like them.In addition."

Rei glanced behind him. The kid turned to follow the direction Rei was looking at and gasped when he saw the Griffon appear unexpectedly.

"Is that a.....Griffon?"

"Ah. Haven't you heard about it? He's quiet popular around the city of Gimuru."

"No, I only recently came to this city.Will it bite me?"

"It will be fine as long as you don't try to do anything funny to him."

".....Can I stroke him?"

He had just met Set for the first time, Rei looked at the kid as he suddenly thought of something.

There were many people who had asked if they could stroke Set after learning that he had a calm temper, but no one had ever asked on their first meeting.

"Gurururu~"

Set was the same as always and sat down as he looked at the kid, giving a happy cry as if saying he could stroke him.

"....."

Slowly but surely, he reached his hand out towards Set's head.....

"Uwa~, it's soft."

Finally, he stroked Set's head. The kid stroked Set's head for a while before Rei spoke up.

"So, what will you do? And why were you involved with those guys?"

".....No. This is something I have to do myself."

"I see. Well, I'm just here to kill some time so I won't ask any more if you don't want to say anything."

"Mm, that is.....though it's a bit late. Thank you for your help."

"Don't worry about it. As I said, I was just killing some time."

Smiling at the kid who had bowed his head, he took out another freshly cooked grilled skewer from the Misty Ring and gave it to the kid.

"Here, eat this for now."

"Ah, yes. Thank you."

Taking out some skewers for himself and Set, the two of them sat on an empty box nearby while Set lay down on the ground to eat the skewers.

"Wafu~, wafu~.....It's delicious.....but, isn't this freshly cooked? Where did you get them from?"

"Hm, I have a magic item that can hold these things."

Rei answered the kid as he savoured the skewers before he unexpectedly eyed an object on the stone pavement.

It was the thing that the kid had used to hit one of the boys earlier.

Rather than a bladeless knife, it was simply a long iron bar. It was something that could be called a short club. Although it wasn't very long, only 20cm, from Rei's knowledge, it was similar to a police baton.

Interested, Rei picked it up from the ground to look at it.

"Ah....."

The kid, who had been focusing on eating his skewer, noticed it. He reached out his hands in a panic.

"G-Give it back!"

At those words, Rei, who hadn't planned on taking the short club away in the first place, handed it to the kid without hesitation.

"Hm? Ah, here. Still, it's quite unusual. Was it made for you?"

"Ah, yes. My father made it for me just in case, as the city can be dangerous."

"Your father made it? What, is your father a blacksmith or something?"

"That's right. He only just came to this city recently but already has a reputation for his good skill. Have you heard of Pamidor?"

Although the kid looked at Rei with expectation in his eyes, Rei shook his head.

"Sorry, I only came back to here yesterday. After that, I was tired so I slept at the inn."

"I see....."

"If I have the opportunity, I will come by. By the way, where is the shop?"

"Umm, there was a library nearby!"

Listen to a more detailed description, Rei confirmed that it was about 10 minutes walk from the library. Because was that close, it was within the area that Rei was familiar with.

(Even so, my weapon, the Death Scythe, was made with the Magic Beast Art. If it were an ordinary magic item, I would still need to sharpen the blade.....ah,

no. But considering my throwing spears and the dagger I use for stripping materials.....)

"I see, I will come by the next time I have a chance."

"Yes. Because you won't get beaten by those guys, you should come for sure."

He could mostly predict why he had been tangled up with the boys earlier at those words. Perhaps the boys were threatening him to bring weapons made by his father or something. If he was a blacksmith's son, he would be less likely to be found out if he had taken some, and as a child, it was difficult for him to fight back against the older kids.

(As expected, I'm not mistaken.)

Finishing eating his last skewer, Rei stood up from the empty box.

"Now then, I was able to kill some time, so I will get going soon.....what about you? Will you get tangled up with those guys again if you stay here?"

"I see. I will also go home."

"It would be better to do that."

Giving a small nod, Rei started to leave the back alley with Set, who had finished eating several skewers, when.....

"Onii-chan, tell me your name!"

When he called out from behind.

"Rei. The Griffon is Set."

"Rei onii-chan, Set, thanks for your help! I'm Kumito!"

TLN: The boys clearly called him Fis, so I'm not sure why his name is Kumito here. Will probably find out in a few chapters time though.

Waving his hand lightly, Rei and Set went out the back alley.

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Chapter 114

After killing some time by helping out Kumito, the son of a blacksmith, Rei and Set made their way to the guild. By the time they arrived, the congested time had already passed and there were only a few adventurers still in the guild.

Of course, there were also adventurers that only came in now because they disliked the crowds. Regardless, Rei dropped Set off at the carriage waiting area before entering the guild and heading straight to the reception desks.

One person quickly noticed Rei.

"Ah, it's Rei-kun isn't it. I haven't seen you for a while, did you go out on a request? Did you suffer? You can just tell me. I will comfort you at any time and spread bad rumors about the adventurers who bullied you."

As soon as Kenny, the Catkin on the other side of the counter, saw Rei, she called out to him.

Then, as a result, the all the adventurers in the guild turned to look at Rei..... in particular, the looks of the male adventurers hardened.

The Kenny, the receptionist, was beautiful and had a voluptuous body which attracted men. Naturally, she was very popular and had many fans. It was no wonder that they would look to see who she was happily waving at.

The reactions of the people who turned to look were divided into two groups. That is to say, those that knew Rei and those that didn't. Because it had been quite a few days since Rei left for the dungeon with Elena, the number of adventurer who hadn't heard about Rei had increased. As for those who had invited her out for a dinner or date and had been flatly refused, they glared at him intensely. Originally, Kenny had a thing for younger guys, but after meeting with Rei, she had started to actively pursue him, both as a hobby and also for her own benefit. While such people turned to look at Rei, fortunately, the adventurers who knew Rei explained to their fellow party members and no reckless actions were made.No, rather, they realised they couldn't.

However, those that didn't know Rei and had nothing to do with those that

did looked at Rei insidiously. Feeling the atmosphere, Lenora, the receptionist with the ponytail next to Kenny, spoke up.

"Hey, Kenny!"

"Mm? What?"

"You, haven't you considered Rei's status....."

While smiling at their usual interaction, Rei headed straight for the counters.

"It's been a while, I'm fine as usual."

"Ahahahaha. Rei-san must have been tired from the long request. What business do you have today?"

Continuing down to Lenora instead of Keny, he handed over a sheet of paper from his robe.

It was the document certifying the completion of the request he had received from Margrave Daska Rowlocks.

At that point, fans of Lenora also turned to look at him, but Rei continued speaking without concerning himself about it at all.

"I would like to report the completion of my request and receive the reward. As for the monster materials, they are all in my item box at the moment and haven't been stripped, I will come in again for them next time."

"I understand. Please wait a moment."

Lenora nodded and took the document before going behind the counters. It seems that there were various aspects that were different from ordinary requests because it was a nominated request.

"Hey, Rei-kun. Did you go to the dungeon for this request? How was it?"

As soon as Lenora left, Kenny's eyes shined as she asked curiously, but as expected, Rei couldn't talk about Vel's betrayal or the Inheritance Ceremony. As a result, he only talked about the bland things that happened.

"Well, the most surprising thing was that there were forests and rivers in the dungeon, there was even something like a sun."

"Eh? Is that true? The dungeon that Rei went to is underground right?"

"Ah, actually, the first and second floors were actually quite normal.....I don't

know how to say it, but they were like an ordinary dungeon. The third floor had a forest of mushrooms and the fourth floor had an actual forest. The fifth floor was full of undead and the sixth floor was filled with traps. There weren't any ordinary monsters on the lowest floor."

At Rei's explanation, Kenny nodded while tilting her head as her imagination couldn't catch up with his description.

While they were talking, a detestable person.....or rather, two adventurers in their mid twenties cut in, looking for a chance to mess with Rei.

"Hey, hey, Kenny-chan may look good, but that doesn't mean you can hide your face. Mm? Why don't you show us your face."

A man with a sword at his waist, who seemed to be a warrior, removed the hood covering Rei's head. What appeared was the face of someone around 15 year old. If anything, Rei's face and figure made him look younger. The companion of the warrior, who was holding a spear, saw Rei's face, unexpectedly spat out.

"Pu, he's still a brat. Hey, hey, stop bluffing and pretending to be tough by saying a brat of your age went to a dungeon."

At those words, one part of the guild.....the people who knew Rei, turned to look at the two in amazement. At the same time, those that didn't about him started to jeer.

".....Hey, can I consider that they're picking a fight with me?"
"Ah, that is, yes. Probably."

Kenny mutter in shock but the two adventurers grinned as they misunderstood.

"You, taking advantage of being a kid to get close to Kenny-chan.....guh-!"

Rei looked at the male warrior who tried to butt in again and, giving a small sigh, dashed forward in an instant. Grabbing the man's neck in his right hand at the same time, he forcibly shut him up and lifted him off the ground.....before hurling him at the man with the spear, who was stunned at the sudden change in situation.

"Gah~!"

As expected, he couldn't believe that a man over 180cm tall and wearing leather armour could be thrown around so easily. The man with the spear fell to the ground without being able to catch the man with the sword. With their momentum, the two of them polished the floor with their bodies for several meters.

『.....』

At that action, the guild went silent. However, the silence was still divided into two groups.

There the people who knew Rei and thoughty 『Ah, as expected.....』 and those that didn't that though 『Who is this person?』.

"You guys must have just registered at the guild recently."

Rei asked the man with the spear. The man with the sword had already fainted.

The man with the spear was shocked, not understanding what had happened, but those words cause his cheeks to cramp.

He now understood what kind of person he had tried to mess around with. Ordinary humans.....or even skilled warriors would find it impossible to swing around a large man in armour with only one hand. However, the other party could do it with no difficulty. In addition, it didn't look like it had strained Rei at all.

"Ah, Ahh. I just came to Gimuru about two days ago."

Knowing the strength of the person he had picked a fight with, the face of the man with the spear paled as he answered the question. He didn't lack guts, but rather was scared of angering the person before him any further.

"I thought you would say that. I....."

As Rei was about to say something, should he say that the timing was good or bad, Lenora returned from behind the counter.

No, in this case, it should be said that the timing was good for the men.

"Rei-san, here's your reward.....ah? What's wrong?"

".....No, nothing at all."

After glancing at the man with the spear one more time and spitting out a sigh, he turned toward Lenora.

"No, Rei-kun was really cool. He was fighting for me! I'm the only one for Rei-kun!"

She left Kenny along for the time being.

"Um.....that is, why is there someone lying on the floor?"

"What? Maybe he's lacking sleep?"

"He's obviously frightened by Rei.Haa, did they try to mess with you like the Claws of the Hawk"

Lenora turned and gave a look of amazement at the man with the spear and the unconscious man with the sword with.

"Scheer-san, Rei is a D rank adventurer. He also holds the record for the shortest time needed to get to D rank, taking a month since registering with the guild. You should pay attention to who you pick your fights with."

"Y-Yes-!"

The man with the spear, Scheer, raised a high pitched cry before running out the guild carrying his companion. Rei's evaluation of him rose slightly when he saw that Scheer did not run away without his companion.

"So, here's your reward. Please check."

Lenora handed him a small cloth bag that she held as if nothing had happened at all. After he received it, he checked its contents. There were two Light Gold coins and one Platinum coin. The reward that Gran had told him before he had received the request was two Light Gold coins so it seemed that the extra Platinum coin was the additional reward Daska had mentioned. Two Light Gold coins. This was an amount of money that would let an ordinary family live without working for ten years. That was why it was kept in a cloth bag, to not show it in front of other adventurers. Rei understood that and thanked Lenora with a smile.

"Sorry and thanks."

"No. This is part of a receptionist's job.Well, in a different sense, Rei-san seems to attract everyone's attention."

As the adventurers in the guild looked at him, Rei shrugged his shoulders.

"Hey, hey. Rather than that, Rei-kun. Have you celebrated since you came back safely from the request? I would like to celebrate Rei-kun's safe return together. I will also provide service."

As if to emphasize it, Kenny puffed up her plump breasts with her arms, showing off the deep valley in her chest.

And when Kenny took a pose to emphasize her breasts, Lenora reacted almost on reflex.

"Hey, Kenny! You're still at work! You can do that after work is over."
"But then Rei-kun may be celebrating with a woman that none of us know."
"I also understand your feelings, but you still have to do your job first!"
"Indeed, women with small breasts are also of small caliber."

At those words, Lenora had veins popping out of her forehead. Even in that state, she still smiled because of her duty as a receptionist.

"Hey, Kenny. What if I reported those words to the guild master.....what would you do?"

"Nya~! Wai-, that's unfair!"

"My colleague is trying to skip out on work. As a serious guild employee, isn't it natural to report that to my boss?"

".....Sorry Rei-kun. Please invite me for a celebration some other time....."

Surrendering, Kenny fell onto the counter. Her plump bulges were squeezed against the counter, causing the gazes of adventurers to gather there.

"Seriously. If a guy comes over....."

Lenora almost instinctively sensed where those gazes gathered and complained unhappily.

The male adventurers who heard her soft voice averted their gazes while Lenora and the other female adventurers coldly watched.

"Well then, I suppose it's time for me to leave. For now, I'll take it slow with

Set.....is what I want to say. I have to strip off the materials of monsters and extract their magic stones. As a reward, the other party gave me almost all the monsters we took down during the request."

As he said that, Rei unintentionally remembered Elena and his cheeks went red when he thought of the moment they kissed.

And naturally, Kenny saw that.....

"Hey, Rei-kun. I don't know who it is but you mustn't get caught in the schemes of a woman!"

And, as if she weren't scheming herself, she approached him.

"Kenny, hey. Please calm down. Rei-san, I'll keep Kenny down so go before it's too late!"

"Hm? Ah, Ahh. I understand."

Giving a small nod at Lenora's words, Rei left the guild feeling that something bad would probably happen here soon.

(Leave this to me and keep going! Or.....no, it was me. What a death flag that is.)

TLN: quick note, the first 'me' is written as 'ore' while the second 'me' is written as 'watashi'

He thought about that in his mind.

"Wait a minute, release me Lenora. My Rei-kun is being tricked by an evil woman!"

"You'd better calm down now!"

Rei left while hearing those voices from behind.

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Chapter 115

"GURURURURU~!"

Set gave a loud cry.

His cry echoed through the clear blue sky. On the ground, the roads leading to the city of Gimuru could be seen, with forests and grass plains spread out around it.

Receiving his reward from the guild, Rei left the city with Set after playing with the children. Of course, it wasn't just to strip materials from monster. More than anything else, it was to absorb magic stones.

"Set, head for the place where we absorbed the magic stones previously."

Rei sat on Set's back said that while stroking his head. Set flapped his wings in a good mood.

"GURURU~!"

Set gave an okay with a brief cry and skillfully changed directions in the air. The previous place where they had absorbed magic stones was a clearing in the middle of the forest, it started to come into view after flying for about 40 minutes.

".....Hm? That felt faster than usual."

Although Rei hadn't measured the time it had taken, he still noticed something felt different. In fact, Set had reduced the time taken for him to fly to the location from 1 hour previously to 40 minutes. As for why, it was proof of Set's growth in the dungeon.

"Gururu~!"

Set gave a cry and flapped his wings as he landed at the clearing.

"Fuu~, thanks for your hard work. Set is as fast as ever."

As a reward, he stroked Set's back for several minutes while enjoying his silky coat.

".....Well then. Although I would like to take things slow and have a break, today's job is to strip all the materials off the monsters. And above that is the absorption of magic stones. I wonder how many there are."

While muttering, he displayed the list of monster he had received from the dungeon trip in his mind.....

"No, numbers aside, how many different monsters were there anyway."

He unintentionally gave a sigh.

In the list in his mind, the largest number of monsters were, of course, the Water Monkeys that had attacked them in the forest on the fourth floor. Because they had attacked as a group continuously, he wasn't able to retrieve all the corpses. However, he had still collected well over 50. With the knowledge of the Magic Beast Art he had received from Zepairu, he knew that Set and the Death Scythe could only learn skills from one magic stone per type of monster. In other words, even if Set absorbed the magic stone of a Water Monkey, if he couldn't learn a skill from it, he wouldn't be able to learn any skills from Water Monkey magic stones. In that sense, the more than 50 corpses of Water Monkeys stored in the Misty Ring were numerous but useless.

However, that was only from the view of the Magic Beast Art, you could still sell the magic stones and materials at the guild or other stores.

Above all, regarding the Water Monkeys magic stones, Set had already absorbed one without learning any skills. The fact that he couldn't expect the Death Scythe to absorb it either brought the tension down.

"Let's start with the ordinary Lizardmen first."

Muttering, he selected Lizardman in his mind. The next moment, a corpse of a Lizardmen appeared before Rei and Set.

"The proof of subjugation was the tip of the tail."

While muttering, he cut off the tips of the tails with his dismantling knife before storing them into the Misty Ring. After that, he skinned them, taking care not to peel off the scales, and stripped any other material that could be sold while reading the book on dismantling as usual.

In the case of Lizardmen, their scaly skin was used as material for armour. Several internal organs could be used as materials in alchemy or for healing potions. The eyeballs could also be sold to create magic items using alchemy. Putting the eyeballs into a special bottle, following the book. Rei then removed the internal organs that he could sell as well as the flesh and stored them into the Misty Ring. As for the remaining internal organs and the heads, he dug a hole and threw them into it.

And.....

"Set!"

Throwing a magic stone that he had taken out of a heart, Set swallowed it in one gulp. However, there was no announcement in his mind of a new skill being learnt.

"Guru~....."

Set was also disappointed. Normally, Rei would try to cheer him up, but the number of monsters he had to go through today was huge. Taking out the corpse of another Lizardman, he stripped off as much material as he could before taking out the Death Scythe. Then, in the same way as before, he removed a magic stone from the heart.....

"If it's the Death Scythe.....how will that go!"

He quickly sliced the magic stone that he threw into the air with the Death Scythe.

".....It's no use?"

An announcement did not sound in his mind and Rei gave a sigh.

After that, he drifted into a state of continuous work, removing the proofs of subjugation from the Lizardmen, stripping material and then removing the magic stone. Flesh went into the Misty Ring while the unusable internal organs went into the hole he dug. Finally, after about an hour since he dismantled the first Lizardman, he finally finished stripping all the materials from them.

"Next is the Lizardman General. Because this is a higher ranking species of Lizardmen, there should definitely be a magic stone.....but, this species isn't in

the book. Could the materials be the same as an ordinary Lizardman?"

Tilting his head, he tried to insert the sharp edge of his knife into the skin, past the scale. But.....

Kin~!

As expected of the Lizardman General. The the sharp edge of the knife couldn't go through the scales and slid off instead.

"Although this is a cheap knife, that was unexpected."

Giving a sigh, Rei unsheathed the Mithril Knife at his waist and poured magic power into it. The blade of the Mithril Knife, with Rei's magic power, cut into the body with almost no resistance, easily removing the scaled skin of the Lizardman General.

After that, he cut off the tip of the tail, just like the other Lizardmen, before removing the eyeballs and taking out the internal organs. The magic stone he took out from the higher ranking species Lizardman was somewhat larger than the rest.

"So, the question is, who should I give the magic stone to, the Death Scythe or Set.....what do you think?"

"Gururu~"

Set shook his head at Rei's question. At Set's round eyes, which told Rei to use it on the Death Scythe rather than him, Rei stroked Set's head with a smile

"Sorry about this, I'll accept your decision."

"Gururu~!"

Set gave a loud cry at Rei's words. Hearing that, Rei threw the Lizardman General's magic stone into the air.

"Haah!"

Cut in two by the Death Scythe, it vanished like smoke.....

【Death Scythe has acquired the skill『Flying Slash Lv.2』】

The announcement of a skill level up rang in his mind.

"Flying Slash Lv.2 is it. It certainly is a general, in other words, it's not strange

for a general.....however, it was slightly different from what I expected. The Lizardman clearly used water related skills if I recall correctly."

Muttering, he swung the Death Scythe at the trees in the surroundings.

"Flying Slash!"

He shouted that as he swung the Death Scythe. The slash that came out looked the same as when it was Lv.1. However, its power was different.

Previously, at Lv.1, it had enough power to leave a deep cut into a tree trunk. Now, the slash could cut through the entire tree trunk.

"I see. It seems its power has definitely gone up. But....."

"Guru~?"

What's wrong? Set seemed to say. Rei stroked Set's tilted head as he thought in his mind.

(Indeed its power is strong. However, there is also a concern if it is that strong. I want to be able to use a weaker Flying Slash when needed.....no, the first thing is to strip off materials and remove the magic stones. Regarding its power, I will just have to train later to learn to adjust its power. This too will take practice.)

"No, nothing at all. For now, it was lucky that we were able to level up a skill with the Lizardman General's magic stone. Well then, onto the next one."

Muttering, he took out the next monster from the Misty Ring.

The next thing to appear was a huge spider. It was the monster that had attacked with the Lizardman General. But due to Rei's fire magic, half its body, including its magic stone had been burned away.

".....This is regrettable. Because it was a spider, I think it would have been possible to gain some thread related skills if I had given it to Set."

Sighing, Rei stripped the materials according to the book. However, because more than half its body had been burnt up, few materials could be stripped.

"First of all is the tips at the end of its legs. Next is the organ that spits out thread.....there's no point. There's also no hope for its fangs. For all the internal organs to be destroyed. Well, I should consider myself luck that I can just get

the tips of its legs."

"Gururu~"

At Rei's sigh, Set came over and rubbed his head against Rei.

"Ahh, no problem. I didn't expect to be able to get any materials or a magic stone from the huge spider. I was lucky to get even a few claws.So, Set. Do you feel like you could eat this spider?"

"Guru~?"

"Ahh, me? As expected, a spider isn't easy. Even if its a humanoid monster, I don't feel as much resistance towards Orcs or other monsters."

"Guru~!"

Eat! Set seemed to say as he gave a loud cry.

".....Well, if you can eat it that's fine. If I'm not mistaken, I feel like I've seen somewhere before in a survival cooking manga that it tastes like chocolate....."

As for Rei himself, his true thoughts were that he wanted to through it away into the hole he had dug for the Lizardmen's internal organs, but if Set wanted to eat it, he would just store it into the Misty Ring.

"Well then, now to think about the next one.Water Monkeys? Well, this is the only one with a lot."

Since Set had already absorbed a Water Monkey magic stone in the dungeon, he only needed to try one more with the Death Scythe, so he took out the corpse of a Water Monkey from the Misty Ring. As expected of the Misty Ring, when it was taken out of the item box, there was still water covering the fur of the corpse of the Water Monkey.

As with the Water Monkey he had dealt with in the dungeon, he cut off its right ear, which was the proof of subjugation, before skinning it with his normal knife. After that, he cut off its head and threw it into the hole with the rest of the internal organs. After taking out the magic stone from its heart, Rei played around with it in his hand.

"Well then, it's called a Water Monkey, so if I get a skill from it, it should be a water related skill....."

Throwing it into the air, he sliced it with the Death Scythe. Just like the the

magic stone of the Lizardman General, it vanished after being cut in two.

".....It's no use it seems. Is this because I'm good at fire magic that the compatibility is bad? No, even though Set absorbed a magic stone in the dungeon, he couldn't gain a skill, so that's not the reason.....I mean, in the first place, Set has learnt Water Ball."

While sighing, he stored the flesh of the Water Monkey into the Misty Ring for Set to eat in future.

"Next is the rare species of Water Monkey. It's highly likely that skills can only be learnt from rare species and higher ranking species."

Muttering, he took the corpse of the rare species out of the Misty Ring.

It was quite large, 1m taller compared with the other Water Monkeys. That's why Rei was able to guess that it was a rare species.

However, even though it was a rare species, it was basically the same as a Water Monkey and there was no change to the dismantling procedure. After cutting off the proof of subjugation, the right ear, Rei used his knife to skin it..... following the exact same procedures for a Water Monkey. And taking out the magic stone from its heart.....

"Set!"

He threw a magic stone one size larger than the Water Monkey's towards Set.

"Gururu~!"

Catching the magic stone in his beak, Set swallowed it. And.....

【Set has learnt the skill 『Water Ball Lv.2』】

A familiar announcement rang in his mind.

"Wow, should I say as expected of a rare species. After all, it seems that rare species give a higher chance of acquiring skills.Set, try using Water Ball now."

"Gururururu~!"

Nodding at Rei's words, Set activated Water Ball. With a cry, two water balls about 30cm in diameter appeared in front of Set.

"When it was Lv.1, it was around 20cm in diameter, so it's gotten slightly bigger. The number has also increased to two.Set, shoot it at the tree over there."

"Gururu~!"

At Rei's instructions, the two water balls flew towards the trunk of a tree growing a bit further away.....

Bang~!

The water balls hit the tree trunk while making a loud noise. It was powerful enough to destroy the outer bark of the tree trunk, slightly more powerful than when it was at Lv.1. The number of water balls had increased to two and its range had also been increased.

"Aside from power, did its range increase? Alright, you did well Set."
"Gururu~"

Rei stroked Set's head with praise. Set gave a comfortable cry.

【Set】

『Water Ball Lv.2』 new 『Fire Breath Lv.2』 『Wind Arrow Lv.1』 『King's Awe Lv.1』 『Poison Claw Lv.1』

【Death Scythe】

『Corrosion Lv.1』 『Flying Slash Lv.2』 new 『Magic Shield Lv.1』

Flying Slash Lv.2: Increase in power compared to Lv.1.

Water Ball Lv.2: Slight increase in power compared to Lv.1. Number of Water Balls that can be created at once increased to two.

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Chapter 116

Rei and Set continued stripping materials from the monsters they had fought in the dungeon and absorbing their magic stones. So far, they had only upgraded two skills, Rei's Flying Slash to Lv.2 and Set's Water Ball to Lv.2.

And the next thing that Rei took out of the Misty Ring was.....

"The Ogre, is it. According to Elena, this one is bigger than others, but it's probably not a rare species."

The body of the Ogre, close to 5m in height, lay before Rei and Set. Originally, it was over 5m in height, but it was a head slightly shorter as it had been cut off by the Death Scythe. It might also look smaller because it was now lying on the ground rather than standing up when Rei had fought it.

"As expected, it's hard to strip materials off a monster this big, but there's no other choice."

Giving a sigh, he first cut off its right ear, which was its proof of subjugation, before looking up Ogres in his book.

"If I'm not mistaken, the proof of subjugation was definitely the right ear. Mm, there's no problems there. With regards to materials that can be stripped, its skin can be used to make armour. Oh, its chest muscles can be used as a material in alchemy.Set?"

"Guru~....."

I want to eat that, Set seemed to say as he lowered his head in disappointment. Rei smiled as he saw that.

"I see, then should we keep the Ogre meat instead of selling it?"
"Gururu~!"

Set gave a joyful cry at Rei's words. Anyhow, Rei wasn't troubled about money as he had just received two Light Gold coins as a reward for escorting Elena, there was no need to sell the materials.

After seeing Set's happy expression, Rei continued reading through his book.

"Ah, its fingernails can be used in medicine. No problems with that."

Muttering, he took the nails off the Ogre's left and right hands before storing them.

"Then there's its internal organs.No, before that, I should skin it. According to the book, it is a good material for making armour."

It took Rei about 30 minutes to skin the Ogre.

Indeed, after stripping materials like this so many times, he had become better at it. There was no awkwardness like the first time he tried stripping materials from the Water Bear as he smoothly skinned the Ogre. In addition, Elk's teachings from when they attacked the Orc village had also been a great help.

"Well, so, the internal organs.....the liver is used in medicine, the lungs are used in alchemy. Oh, and the bones can be used in smithing.Bones, haa. No, everything is an experience so it would be good to strip them out."

He thought of the troublesome task of removing the flesh and bones from an Ogre almost 5m in height.....

"Should I forget about it for now? If I store it into the Misty Ring, it won't rot."

He came to a decision.

"I've taken most of the materials I could, so the last thing is the magic stone."

He removed the magic stone from its heart. As expected of the large Ogre, its magic stone was also quite big.

".....Well then. Who will absorb this magic stone. Right now, both Set and the Death Scythe have upgraded one skill each."

"Guru~"

Set nodded in agreement. While looking at Set, Rei checked what monsters remained in the Misty Ring.

"The Spriggan and Emerald Wolves are left. Because there are quite a few Emerald Wolves, there's no need to reserve those. In that case, we just have to divide the Ogre's and the Spriggan's.What will you do?"

"Gurururu~?"

Set tilted his head at Rei's question. Set and the Death Scythe, there was no guarantee that either of them could learn a skill even if they absorbed the magic stone, so Set didn't seem to care. Rei came to a decision with his intuition.

"Then, the Death Scythe will get the Ogre's magic stone and set will get the Spriggan's magic stone?"

"Guru~!"

Of course, Set seemed to say as he gave a cry. Seeing that, Rei threw the Ogre's magic stone into the air before slashing it with the Death Scythe.

The magic stone was cut in two and vanished like mist.....

【Death Scythe has acquired the skill 『Power Slash Lv.1』】

An announcement sounded in his mind.

"Power Slash? Judging from its name, it doesn't sound like a long distance skill like Flying Slash.....now then, what does it do?"

Rei approached a tree growing nearby with a smile.

And raising the Death Scythe.....

"Power Slash!"

At the same time he activated the skill, he swung the Death Scythe!

Slash-!

The sweeping blade, cutting right through the tree with barely any resistance.Yes. Without any magic power poured into the blade.

As a result, Rei turned to look at the tree he had just cut with a surprised expression.

Looking at it, it was more accurate to say that he had cleaved through it that sliced through it.

"As expected, it's a skill to increase the power of an attack. However, rather than cleanly cutting through it, it just pushes through with brute strength, like its name says.This skill seems useful."

Rei nodded in satisfaction. In any case, the skills that the Death Scythe had

acquired were Corrosion, which wasn't effective if the opponent didn't have any metal equipment, Flying Slash for long range attacks and Magic Shield for defense. To Rei, the skill Power Slash, which increased the power of a melee attack, was something he really wanted.

"With this, I have some expectations for Set absorbing the Spriggan's magic stone."

"Guru~"

Rushed along by Set, Rei postponed further dismantling the flesh and bones of the Ogre and stored it into the Misty Ring. He then took out the corpse of the Spriggan. It was about 6m tall, taller than the Ogre. In addition, unlike the Ogre, who had its head cut off, the Spriggan had only had its left hand cut off, so its size stood out more.

"Umm.....Spriggan, Spriggan....."

Rei searched through the book while muttering.....

"It isn't in here."

Maybe it was too rare a monster, there was no information on Spriggans in the book.

"Ahh, I can't careless dismantle it. First of all, I should go buy a more advanced book on stripping materialsshould I just skin it for now?"

Giving a sigh, he used a knife to skin the Spriggan. Regardless of its size, the procedure of skinning it was not much different from the Ogre he had skinned earlier. After skinning the Spriggan in 30 minutes, he left the internal organs that might be useful materials and removed the magic stone from its heart.

"Now then, A Spriggan's magic stone, what skills could be learnt, I wonder. It could be the skill that the Spriggan used to change its size."

Rei imagined the figure of a 4m long Set in his mind.

Indeed, if Set was twice as big as he was now, with a Griffon's original strength, the increase in strength would be overwhelming. But considering Rei would be able to let others see Set like that, he was rather troubled.

"In the end, we have to try. Set."

"Gururu~!"

Set skillfully caught the magic stone that Rei threw in his beak and swallowed it straight away. And.....

【Set has acquired the Skill 『Size Transformation Lv.1』】

An announcement sounded in his mind.

"As expected it seems. Set, try using Size Transformation now."

"Gururu~!"

Set nodded at Rei's words and gave a loud cry. And the next moment.

".....What?"

In front of Rei, Set had clearly changed in size. That is to say, Set's size was significantly different from before. However, he had shrunk from 2m in length to 1m in length. In other words, he had shrunk to half size.

"Kuru~!"

Set himself didn't seem to understand what had happened and tilted his head as he suddenly felt that the things around him had become bigger.

Rei thought about why that had happened as he looked at Set.

(Shrinking, is it? I really thought he would get bigger.....this is an unexpected result. But why shrink.....no, wait. Seriously, the skill Set obtained from the magic stone of the Spriggan really allowed him to change his size. In other words, it is definitely a characteristic of the Spriggan. In other words, I thought the smaller form was the Spriggan's true form, in actuality, the bigger body is its true form. Because of that, using Size Transformation made him shrink..... something like that?)

Rei roughly guessed why Set had shrunk after using Size Transformation and gave a sigh as he stroked the head of Set, who was getting anxious.

"Kururu~?"

Because Set had shrunk, even his cries had become cuter. Rei unintentionally smiled as he spoke.

"Don't worry about it. It's just a bit confusing.If you think about it

carefully, it's convenient if you can shrink. When you have to hide from enemies or stealthily sneak up on someone.....well, 1m in size would still be a bit difficult."

"Kururu-!"

It's okay, Set seemed to say as he gave a loud cry.

"Okay, you can turn back to normal now."

"Kuru~!"

Set gave a short cry and turned back into a 2m long Griffon in the next moment.

"Ah, that was truly unexpected. But as I said earlier, don't mind that you can only shrink, it has its uses.However, don't use it in a place where there are a lot of other people or adventurers."

"Guru~"

"Now then. The last monster. The rank C monster, Emerald Wolf. I think you can also acquire skills from it as it's a monster with quite a high rank."

Muttering, He first took out a corpse of an Emerald Wolf from the Misty Ring. Like the emerald in its name, its fangs were a deep green, it almost looked like its fangs were made of emerald.

But of course, its fangs were not made of emerald. The general theory was that fangs looked like that because the Emerald Wolves circulated magic power through them.

"According to the book.....first of all is the fangs. It can be used as a catalyst in alchemy, or used by a blacksmith to make weapons and armour. It can also be used as a material by pharmacists. Next is its fur. It seems there is a high demand for it in armour and clothing stores. Then there are the internal organs.....its liver, tongue and eyes can be used as materials. Then there's the heart.....is that right?"

According to the book, it said that the heart could also be purchased as materials, but only if the magic stone was left embedded inside.

"Well, because I have quite a few Emerald Wolves, I could leave a few hearts."

First of all, he cut off the tentacles, which were the proofs of subjugation. He

then skinned it before taking out the internal organs that could be sold as materials, storing the liver into a container, before storing them into the Misty Ring. After that, he cut into the head to remove the fangs from the root so that they wouldn't break. At the same time, he cut off the tongue and took out the eyes, which were a dark green, like the fangs. He put them into a container, like the he did with the liver, and stored them into the Misty Ring.

In addition, the meat of the rank C Emerald Wolf could be purchased for quite a bit of money as it contained a lot of magical power. However, Rei rarely sold monster meat because it could be kept as food for Set.

He might have sold it if he didn't have the Misty Ring though as the meat would go bad. However, if he stored it into the Misty Ring, it would always be fresh and he could sell it at any time.

"Now then. Do you want to go first Set"
"Guru~"

Set, who was listening to Rei, raised his head as Rei threw the Emerald Wolf's magic stone over. Catching it in his beak as usual, Set swallowed it.....

【Set has acquired the skill 『Tornado Lv.1』】

An announcement sounded in Rei and Set's minds.

"Tornado, is it. No, they certainly used wind based magic, so it's not impossible. Set, try using it."
"Gurururu~"

After Set gave a cry, the next moment, a tornado about a meter in height formed a short distance away.

".....What to say, it looks quite shabby."
"Guru~....."

"Ah, no. I'm not blaming you Set. It's only Lv.1.....no, wait? A tornado. Hmm, this may be quite useful."
"Guru~?"

What's wrong? Set seemed to say as he tilted his head. Rei smiled as he stroked Set's head.

"We will try something after the Death Scythe absorbs a magic stone as well. Perhaps this Tornado is a good skill."

Saying that to Set, he took out another Emerald Wolf from the Misty Ring and quickly processed it like the previous one. Tossing the magic stone into the air and cutting it with the Death Scythe.....

【Death Scythe has acquired the skill 『Wind Hand Lv.1』】

The announcement echoed in his mind.

【Set】

『Water Ball Lv.2』 『Fire Breath Lv.2』 『Wind Arrow Lv.1』 『King’s Awe Lv.1』
『Poison Claw Lv.1』 『Size Transformation Lv.1』 new 『Tornado Lv.1』new

【Death Scythe】

『Corrosion Lv.1』 『Flying Slash Lv.2』 『Magic Shield Lv.1』 『Power Slash Lv.1』
new 『Wind Hand Lv.1』 new

Power Slash: Power of the attack will increase. However, it is not a swift attack, but rather, a heavy strike.

Size Transformation: Allows shrinking below original size. At Lv. 1, Set can shrink to 1m in length.

Tornado: Creates a tornado. The size of the tornado depends on level. At Lv. 1, the tornado is about 1m tall.

Wind Hand: A colourless and clear tentacle made of wind magic extends from the Death Scythe. It is possible to interact with objects with the tip of the wind tentacle.

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Chapter 117

"Wind Hand, eh. I got another strange skill."

Rei murmured as the announcement sounded in his mind. He then tried to activate the skill, proof of his expectations could only be found by testing it.

He immediately felt something like a tentacle stretching out from the Death Scythe as soon as he activated it.

Yes, he could feel it. It wasn't actually visible. Originally, Rei didn't have the ability to sense the magic power of others either, but maybe because the tentacle was made with his own magic power or because it was activated through the Death Scythe, he could sense the tentacle made from wind magic.

Either way, he would feel the presence of the clear tentacle made from wind.

"Rather than Wind Hand, I feel that Wind Tentacle is a more suitable name."

Extending the tentacle from Death Scythe as he tilted his head, the tip of the tentacle touched a fallen tree branch about 30cm in length.

The next moment, the branch was lifted up by the wind tentacle, following Rei's will.

".....I see. It may be strange to call the skill Wind Hand, but it's not that strange if you consider its effect."

At that point, finally understood the way Wind Hand was used. That is to say, it extended an invisible tentacle made of wind to touch an object. After that, the object could be manipulated using the wind tentacle. It was like an invisible hand made of wind.

"But....."

He quickly threw a stone that was on the ground nearby and tried to catch it with the wind hand. When the stone came in contact with the tentacle portion of the Wind Hand, it passed right through and flew to the other side.

"That was it after all. Only the tip of the tentacle can function as a hand, that part of the skill does not affect the 'arm' section. And....."

He tried to extend the wind hand as far as possible. After about 100m, it seemed to reach its limit and couldn't extend any further.

"Does the distance increase if the skill level goes up? No, no matter how far it can extend, if it goes out of my vision, it would become unreasonable to use."

Withdrawing the extended wind hand, he then used it to grab a fallen stone.

"There is only a fixed portion at the tip of the wind hand that can be used to manipulate things. At Lv.1, it's not strong enough to move large things. Well, there's enough power to lift a stone the size of my fist, so it's quite powerful..... power? No, in this case power isn't that important, if I combine it with Set's skills....."

While nodding and muttering to himself, he quickly stored the materials and meat of the Emerald Wolf in front of him into the Misty Ring. At the same time, he threw a fire ball into the hole that he had dumped all the internal organs he didn't want, burning them up. He then filled up the hole with dirt.

"Gururu~?"

What about the other Emerald Wolves? Set seemed to ask as he tilted his head.

"Ah. There's something I want to try first. Because time is frozen inside the Misty Ring, I will deal with the Emerald Wolves when I have time to spare. Rather than that Set, I want to try something so we have to move to a place with a bit more open space."

Rei felt a bit different and got on Set looking like he was in a rush.

"Set, look for an large open space. That's right, look for something like a plain or scrubland"

"Gururu~? Gururu~!"

Set tilted his head slightly, before understanding what Rei was looking for. After giving a short cry, he ran a few steps as he flapped his wings. And as if leaping into the sky. he flew up, rising tens of meters into the air in just a few seconds.

Reaching that height, he looked around from in the sky. On one side, a green

carpet was spread before him. The sunlight poured down on this autumn day, making the plains seem shine as they reflected the sunlight. At the same time, he could see several wild animals and monsters moving around along the ground. He could also see adventurers who might have taken a request. They were currently about a day's walk from Gimuru, Rei guessed that they were probably skilled adventurers.

Well, for Set, it was only less than an hour's travel from Girumu.

"Thinking about that, I'm quite blessed to have such mobility."

"Guru~?"

Even as he flew, Set turned his head to look at Rei.

Rei stroked Set's neck with a smile when he saw that.

"No, it's nothing at all. I just want to say I'm really grateful of you Set."

"Gururu~!"

Giving a happy cry, they enjoyed their walk through the sky for about 10 minutes. Fortunately, there was no situation like being attacked by flying monsters and they safely arrived at a scrubland that Rei had been hoping for.

".....Well then, here is good. It's the perfect place to experiment."

Rei got onto the ground and looked around before nodding in satisfaction.

The surrounding area was pretty much a wilderness, most of the spreading grasslands they had seen earlier had disappeared. Only after traveling for several hours on foot would one see grasslands again.

"First of all.....that's right, Set. I will use magic now, trying using Tornado so it overlaps with my magic. Once your skill activates, it will get dangerous, so back away immediately."

"Guru~!"

Hearing Set's reply, he took out the Death Scythe, his magic casting tool, from the Misty Ring.

『Flames, manifest your burning heat as a vortex.』

As he cast the spell, compressed flames started to appear along the handle of the Death Scythe. Because he was still experimenting, he didn't put much of his

magic power into the spell. However, this was only from Rei's perspective. The amount of magic power he actually used would be considered full power for other ordinary mages.

And when the spell was completed and the flames fully compressed, he swung the handle of the Death Scythe towards the ground!

『Twisting Flames!』

The compressed flames landed about 10m away, revealing a tornado like flame. However, the flames did not extend past the shape of the tornado, maintaining a radius of about several meters.

(I wonder if this will work. But.....)

Muttering in his mind, Rei turned towards Set.

"Set."

"Gururu~!"

At Rei's cue, Set activated Tornado on top of the flame tornado as he had been told. And with that, Rei and Set retreated a full speed, taking some distance before looking to see the result of their work.

A tornado of fire and a tornado of wind. The two of them merged.....but the next moment, the flames absorbed the wind tornado, as if burning it up.

".....It's no use?"

"Guru~"

I'm sorry, Set seemed to say as he lowered his head. But Rei scratched Set's head without being too concerned.

"Don't worry about it. That was good for now. If Set's Tornado reaches a higher level, the result may be closer to what I expect. It can't be helped given its current level."

(As far as I could see, the fire and wind didn't mix well, it seemed that the wind was just absorbed by the flames. That means, if I can merge them without one side getting completely absorbed.....)

Rei muttered in his mind. Rei was trying to replicate phenomenon known as 『Fire Whirl』. Flames would burn up the Oxygen in a certain area around it,

causing a local air current caused by air around the flames getting pulled in. As the flames rise up with the updraft, a tornado of fire, known as a fire whirl would form. The temperature of the winds and flames caused by the the fire whirl could reach up to 1000°C. Inside the fire whirl, wind speeds could reach up to hundreds of meters per second, destroying everything inside. He had tried to reproduce the phenomenon with his magic and Set's skill but the result was the flames absorbing the wind, as he had seen.

(In order to reproduce the fire whirl, I can't just use my fire magic. That's why I thought it would be possible if I had Set use Tornado at the same time.....well, that's fine. There are still other things to try.

"Set, one more time. But this time, I will also try using the Wind Hand skill that the Death Scythe just learnt. I think that the probability of success will increase, so we will back away again after using our skills."

"Gurururu~"

Set nodded at Rei's words. Seeing that, Rei started to cast a spell again.

『Flames, manifest your burning heat as a vortex.』

And swinging the Death Scythe, the mass of flames that had gathered on the handle flew forward.

『Twisting Flames!』

A tornado of flame appeared again. Seeing that, he grasped the Death Scythe firmly as he gave the signal to Set.

"Set!"

"GURURURURURU~!"

At the same time as his cry, a tornado of wind appeared, overlapping the fire tornado. After seeing that, Rei and Set retreated as before. Then, clenching the Death Scythe, Rei activated Wind Hand.

A tentacle made from wind magic extended out from the Death Scythe. It reached out towards where the the fire and wind tornadoes overlapped. It seemed that the fire tornado created with Rei's magic was more powerful, and gradually absorbed the wind tornado as a result. The moment he felt that the same situation as before would occur.....the tip of the tentacle created by Wind

Hand made contact with the two tornadoes of fire and wind.

"-!?"

At the moment of contact, Rei poured magic power through the Death Scythe, into the wind tentacle and into the wind tornado, just as the flames were about to fully absorb it. Then, gradually, the wind tornado withstood the erosion by the flames and grew in size.....After a few seconds, both tornadoes reached the same size, overlapping each other.

The two tornadoes existed separately for a few seconds before the tornadoes of fire and wind fused with each other. In other words, the fire whirl that Rei was trying to reproduce appeared. At the same time.

"Guh!"

"Gururu~!"

Immediately after the two tornadoes fused and turned into a fire whirl, an intense wave of hot air blew against Rei and Set, who were 100m away. Rei and Set moved further back. Only when they were 500m away did the temperature drop to somewhat warm.

".....I underestimated it a bit. However, although this can be used for wide area destruction, it takes a lot of time and effort to set up."

Rei's fire magic, Set's Tornado and the Death Scythe's Wind Hand. Requiring three steps, and further requiring some time for the fire and wind tornadoes to merge, it was better to think that I wouldn't be usable in ordinary subjugation requests. And while they wouldn't die if they didn't take enough distance before the tornadoes fused, they could still suffer injuries.

"On the other hand, would it be possible to effectively damage slow monsters or large numbers of monsters?"

He muttered quietly as he watched the blazing fire whirl with Set.

"For example, the Bestir Empire's army, maybe."

Yes, a bulky enemy with slow movements. In other words, armies, if you considered them from the point of a single entity. He had heard from Elena that after this winter, a war with the Bestir Empire was likely to occur next spring.

Rei felt that this fire whirl could be used as one of his trump cards then. Damage from just the heat extended for 100m. At the same time, the high temperature around it could cause indirect damage. Under 100m, Rei could use 『Dancing Flames』 to attack. It could create a translucent red dome to annihilate enemies inside it, but nothing outside the dome would be damaged. In comparison 『Dancing Wild Flame』 had a wider effective range and was more suitable for dealing with large numbers of enemies. Above all, the combined effect of multiple spells and skills lasted a long time. Even now, the fire whirl was still burning, destroying everything around it.

"Even so, there are still various things we have to look out for.....training will be required for that. Set, We've succeeded in creating an attack with has quite a bit of power. Thanks."

"Gurururu~"

Stroked while being praised, Set gave a happy cry.

They continued watching the fire whirl and it naturally died out after about an hour. After seeing that, Rei and Set returned to the city of Gimuru.

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Chapter 118

The day after experimenting with the fire whirl, Rei appeared in the adventurer's guild once again. He came in between breakfast and lunch, so there were a lot less adventurers inside the guild. There were a few people who were already drinking at the bar in the morning as well as some adventurers who were having an early lunch in preparation for taking a request in the afternoon.

.....The few people that were drinking alcohol were probably either taking a day off or celebrating the completion of a request.

In the quiet environment of the guild, as if the morning rush was all a lie, Rei walked to the counters.

"Ah, Rei-kun. Have you come to take a request?"

Seeing Kenny, the receptionist, spot him and call out to him while waving her hand with a big smile, Rei shook his head.

Unusually, Lenora wasn't at the counter today and Kenny was the only receptionist present.

"No, I would like to sell the monster materials and magic stones I stripped off yesterday and claim the rewards from proofs of subjugation."

"I see. Then, take them out.....is what I would like to say, but how much is there? Because Rei-kun has an item box, you have quite a bit don't you?"

Rei nodded with a sigh at Kenny's perceptive questions.

"Ahh. There's quite a lot. I doubt whether it will all fit on the counter."

"Is that so? Then I can appraise them in a different room. I have some free time now as well....."

"Hey, Kenny. What are you thinking. What will happen if there's no one at the counter."

A voice came out from behind the counter. It was the voice of Lenora, who he had already become familiar with.

Apparently she wasn't on holiday today and had simply gone to the back.

"In that case, Lenora can just come to the counter instead."

"Hey Kenny, you only just started your shift 10 minutes ago. Also, because you are too generous to Rei-san, you might overlook the quality checks and other things. I'll will check for Rei-san."

"Wai-, that's unfair!"

"I have permission from the boss.See."

For a moment, Lenora glanced towards an older man who was further back behind the counters.

The older man gave a small nod at Lenora's glance.

"Like this, Epoca-san.....so cruel."

"You act like this every day. Well then, Rei-san, on the second floor.....could you go to the meeting room that was used for the Orc subjugation and your rank up test? I will check your materials and magic stones there."

"Ahh, I'll be counting on you."

With that, he and Lenora went up to the meeting room on the second floor.

The meeting room didn't seem to be in use and there was no one inside. In the meantime, Lenora grouped all the tables to the center of the room to make a place for the materials and another place to put the materials that had already been appraised.

"You look quite used to this."

When Rei said that unconsciously, Lenora spoke up as she moved the desks.

"Ehh. You'll understand if you take a look at the counter but it's not that big. Because of that, when parties with several members or several parties working together complete a request, we will use the meeting room to appraise the materials. That said, when you come to the guild with a cart or wagon full of materials, carrying them all up to the second floor starts to get very troublesome.The truth is that it is possible to make a larger space on the first floor just for that, but the higher ups in the guild seems to have rejected it every time it was suggested.Now then. I'm ready now, so you can start taking them out."

Listening to Lenora's words, he took out the magic stones, materials and

proofs of subjugation from the Misty Ring one after the other. Lizardmen, a Lizardman General, a Huge Spider, Water Monkeys, the rare species Water Monkey, an Ogre, a Spriggan and Emerald Wolves. That and the other monsters they had killed on the way to the dungeon and in the dungeon piled up on the tables.

Fortunately, most of the Water Monkeys and Emerald Wolves were still stored in the Misty Ring. Also, since some of the magic stones had been used to let Set and the Death Scythe acquire skills, there were a lot more materials and comparatively less magic stones, which would make the guild staff puzzled.

"I heard that you keep most of the monster meat to feed the Griffon.....but why are there so few magic stones? Although they are mostly low rank monsters, there's quite a lot of material."

"Ah, no. I actually started a hobby of collecting magic stones. I keep two of every from every kind of monster. I keep them for ornamental purposes."

".....Well, there are quite a few eccentric adventurers so I don't mind. Still, a magic stone collection you say. That is quite a strange hobby."

(Was it a bit forced after all? But, it's better than her suspecting why I would keep selling materials with no magic stone each time.....at least that's what I hope.)

"As you know, I have an item box. So even if the number of magic stones increases, I don't have to worry about it at all."

"It's quite convenient. Now then, I will appraise the materials. Ah, please put the proofs of subjugation on the table over there. It will be helpful if you could group them by type."

Following Lenora's instructions, Rei sorted the proofs of subjugation and placed them beside the materials.

For a while, Lenora silently did her work before she unexpectedly spoke up.

"Rei-san, did you strip all these materials by yourself?"

"Hm? Ahh, I'm working alone after all. I can't let Set strip the materials and risk destroying them."

"Isn't it hard to strip this much material all by yourself?"

"Well, it is. Depending on the size of the monster, it could take up to 30

minutes to strip the materials from one."

Regardless of if they were small or large monsters, skinning them took a surprisingly long time. He had to do it carefully considering the quality the skins had to be in. It require more careful processing than other materials. Even if he had become more accustomed to stripping off material, his speed could only be considered average compared to other adventurers.

"But, as I said, there's not helping it since I'm going solo."

(Although I can pass off the magic stones as being collected for a hobby, Set.....the people here can't know that he has skills a Griffon shouldn't have.Yes, besides her.)

That moment, a beautiful girl with golden hair flashed through Rei's mind. Elena Kerebel. Knowing the truth behind Rei and Set, she hadn't changed her attitude towards them. If he partied with someone like that then he wouldn't need to hide anything.....

(Well, that wouldn't happen normally.)

He thought of that simply.

In any case, she was a duke's daughter, the General Princess, the symbol of the Nobles Faction, the largest faction in the Mireana Kingdom. Even though she was also an adventurer, other people would not permit him to form a party with her.

"I couldn't possibly look for party member just to strip materials."

As he thought about that by himself, he spoke without thinking, to which Lenora responded.

"That is possible though? Of course it wouldn't be a long term party."

".....What?"

Rei, who had been arranging the tips of the Lizardmen tails, the proof subjugation, looked towards Lenora unintentionally at those words.

Lenora was currently checking the fangs of the Emerald Wolves.

"I just said that it is possible. Ah, though it would be a party exactly. You could submit a request to recruit adventurers to help dismantle monsters and strip

materials."

".....So that was a valid method."

In all honesty, being an adventurer up until now, he had only been aware that he could receive requests. It had never occurred in his mind that he could submit requests of his own. Certainly, this would drastically decrease the time and labour he would need to strip the materials from the monsters himself. But.....

"I think there would be various problems though, what are your thoughts?"

Of course, to strip materials, other adventurers would need to get their hands on the monsters that Rei killed. That included shady adventurers, who weren't few in number.....

"Regarding that, I'm sorry but I can't help there. It would be possible for Rei-san to interview the adventurers who took the request. However, if you have a good relationship with another party, it is possible to submit a nominated request without going through the guild.....ah, please pretend you didn't hear that just now."

"A request without going through the guild? Tell me more."

".....Fuu~. I was the one who spoke too much, I guess there's no helping it."

Lenora put the Lizardman General's eyes into a case for preservation on the desk and gave a sigh before speaking.

"Occasionally, a client will not go through the guild and will request an adventurer directly. Of course, such a request is not a proper request. In some situations, it can be borderline legal and in other situations it can be a crime. As the reward for these kinds of requests are typically several to a dozen times greater than the rewards posted in the guild, Adventurers who aren't aware of the conditions may get caught up in them. Well, in some cases, the client just doesn't want to pay the fee to go through the guild.....that does happen."

"I see. For now, I'll definitely go through the guild for things like this."

"That is good. The guild can't run if it doesn't collect any intermediary fees. Because of that, Rei-san should be careful about these kinds of requests."

"Huh? Why me?"

Rei looked at Lenora with a blank face.

However, Lenora continued to explain with a serious expression.

"Listen carefully. It hasn't been long since Rei-san has registered with the guild, but you are already the fastest adventurer to reach rank D in Gimuru. In other words, your skills are good. And although I'm not too familiar with your background.....it seems you're not that good at socialising."

"No, well. I can't argue back if you put it that way."

"In other words, with your skills and lack of knowledge, it makes it easy for you to get caught up in criminal activities like the ones I mentioned earlier.Well, if it's Rei-san, you would probably just beat them up once you realised what was going on."

She shook her head while sighing.

"Ah, but because Rei-san is always followed by a Griffon, you're famous in the city of Gimuru in various ways. It may be hard for those people to try to invite you."

".....So, what should I do about it?"

"What? Well, that is each adventurer's own responsibility. It's fine to strip materials from monsters by yourself. It's also fine to hire other adventurers to do it for you. Speaking of what I can do, I could also inform you about the reputation of the party that wants to take up the request."

"Is it okay to talk about the reputation of other parties?"

"There's nothing unusual about that though? It is a normal service provided by the guild if interviews are required before the request."

Rei finished organising all the proofs of subjugation and nodded after thinking about Lenora's words for a while.

"I see, then I might put out a request for that. After the appraisal is done, I would like to ask you about the procedures for that."

"Yes, I understand. The appraisal will take a bit more time.Still, the material that you've stripped has become much better in quality."

Lenora murmured in admiration as she appraised the fur of an Emerald Wolf.

"I had to do it all by myself. So I got better at it over time. I was also taught by Elk to some extent."

"Elk-san? Axe of the Thunder God?Ahh, speaking of that, you did become

acquainted during the matter with the Orcs."

Speaking of top class adventurers in the city of Gimuru, Lenora recalled the personality of the mischievous kid who had since grown up. There was no doubt in his ability, but with his character, he would sometimes cause an uproar. Lenora had been caught up in those uproars several times herself as they had happened in the guild.

TLN: Woah, woah, this feels weird. Lenora is still pretty young but she remembers when Elk was young. Elk is now married with a teenage kid. I can't even.

Lenora kept appraising the materials and magic stones while continuing the conversation, finishing up after about 30 minutes.

"I still can't get used to this."

Looking at Lenora appraise the materials one after the other and disposing of the proofs of subjugation, Rei murmured.

At Rei's words, Lenora gave a smile and a small nod.

"If you keep doing it, you'll get used to it as well Rei-san."

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Chapter 119

"Then, it will be 1 platinum coin and 8 gold coins for the purchase of all the materials and the submitted proofs of subjugation, please double check."

At the counter on the first floor of the guild, Rei counted the gold and platinum coins that Lenora gave him. With regards to the monster materials that he had brought in this time, he hadn't taken out the rare monsters he had killed, like the Spriggan. Most of the Emerald Wolves, whose materials could be sold at quite a high price, were also still in the Misty Ring as he hadn't stripped the materials from them yet.

Satisfied with payout, Rei placed the bag of gold and platinum coins at his chest, under Dragon Robe

Seeing that, Lenora spoke up again.

"So Rei. The matter of the request I spoke of before....."

"Ah, thanks."

That manner of conversation.....how to say it, as the two of them continued to talk in a very familiar manner, Kenny, who was attending to other adventurers next to them, gave Lenora an envious glance.

At Kenny's look, Lenora gave a small smile, thinking it served her right, before taking out several papers from under the counter.

"Yes, please write down the contents of the request. Since the guild fee is determined by the rank of the request, please take that into consideration. Regarding the rank of the request, the guild will judge that based on the contents of the request."

"I understand. So, should I write the contents of the request here?"

"That's right. If you can't write, I can also do it for you....."

"There are no problems there."

"Well then, please fill this document. Ahh, it's no problem even if you take it away to fill it in and return it later, okay?"

It was almost noon and adventurers were starting to come in for food. Seeing

people starting to come in for lunch, Lenora told that to Rei.

Although Lenora thought that it might not be so good to have to write a request in a noisy environment, Rei shook his head and filled the document where he was.

(The content of the request is to strip monster materials. The main monsters are the ones I have a lot of, like the Water Monkeys and the Emerald Wolves. There's also the rare Spriggan. However, the Spriggan has already been skinned and its magic stone taken out. As for the number of low ranking monsters.....um. Regarding rewards, regardless of the number of applicants, they will get 3 gold coins each.....is that too much? I'll pay them 1 gold coin per person. However, they might get some bonuses based on the quality of their work.

Writing the details of the request on the document, Rei passed it back to Lenora.

"Is something like this okay?"

"Um, please wait a moment."

After reading through the document, Lenora shook her head.

"I think you should include what materials need to be stripped and penalties for stealing materials. Also, the reward may be a bit too high."

"Is it that much?"

"Yes. If you consider that they will get a reward by stripping the materials from monsters they didn't have to fight, then yes."

"But, I think that it will quite hard work because there is a large amount."

At Rei's words, Lenora read through the application again.

"Yes.....that is true. The number of Water Monkeys is certainly close to 50....."

Thinking for a few seconds, Lenora turned to Kenny, who was beside her.

"Hey, Kenny. Has there been a request to strip materials before?"

Maybe she thought that she could now get openly involved with Rei's request, Kenny smiled as she shook her head.

"I don't think so. Basically, most people work in parties, so the stripping of

materials doesn't take that much effort. At the very least, I don't think I've seen one since I started working at the guild. And if ordinary parties do submit something like that, the corpses will already have started to rot."

"In that case, there's no precedent for the remuneration.I understand, then we will go with the amount of money that Rei-san has written in the document. What about the penalties? Although it may not be necessary if Rei-san supervises them."

"No, I'll add it in. I would like to do something else rather than silently watch them strip the materials from 50 Water Monkeys.That's right, if they get caught stealing, I will use them as an test subject for magic experiments, I would be thankful if you could write that in."

At the words 'test subject for magic experiments', Lenora raised her eyebrows slightly, while beside her, Kenny gave an interesting smile.

"Speaking of this, may I ask what kind of magic it would be?"

"Well, I haven't thought about that yet. Now that I actually think about it.....ah, if I think about the magic I'm good at, then it's pretty much going to be fire magic."

In reply, Rei gave a smile that didn't lose out to Kenny's as he spoke. Although there weren't too many adventurers in the guild, those that heard Rei's words and saw his smile swore to themselves that they would never steal anything from him if they ever took one of Rei's requests. Fire magic was pretty much an offensive magic, it barely had any support magic. This was because the effect of magic was decided by the image the mage formed in their mind and fire gave the strong impression of destruction.

"Mm, mm, Rei-kun is strict with his work. That is also attractive."

To Kenny, anything that Rei did was always taken with a positive perspective.

"Also, since I also need to strip materials from a Spriggan and Emerald Wolves, I would like to request that people who have experience in stripping materials from those monsters be given a higher priority."

".....Yes, I understand. Please wait a moment. The bos"

Giving a quick bow, Lenora left. Kenny saw that, and seeing that there were no other adventurers waiting, started to talk with Rei.

"Hey, hey, Rei-kun. You just finished a big request, why don't you take a break for a while? If you don't mind, would you also like to date onee-san as well?"

"Ahh, I'm sorry, but I have the matter of the request I just put out, after taking care of that, I would like to start taking requests again."

"So fast already, you really like to keep people waiting.Then, when you have some free time, go out to do some shopping with me."

Kenny returned to her seat at the counter while winking. A few adventurers who entered the guild just after that, went to her. Rei looked at them and felt that one of them looked familiar. Maybe the other person realised who Rei was at the same time, he said some words to his party members, who had looks of surprise, before leaving them and heading over to Rei.

"Long time no see. I've heard a lot of gossip about you."

"I haven't heard as much about you though, Runo."

Yes, the person who walked over was Runo, the rank C adventurer Rei had met when had just joined the guild.

It was the adventurer who had been working with the rank D party, Claws of the Hawk, when they had picked a fight with Rei just after Rei had arrived in the city of Gimuru for the first time. He had went to the dungeon with the Claws of the Hawk where he was tasked with identifying traps using his eyes, which could see magic power. At that time, he had said that he was working solo and had only formed a temporary party with the Claws of the Hawk.....it seems that the other adventurers Kenny was dealing with were now the temporary party he was working in.

"You can't lump me together with you. I'm just one of the adventurers around here."

"No, I'm also an adventurer though."

Runo waved his hands with a wry smile at Rei's unintentional retort.

"Don't say that. In the Orc village, you killed the Orc King in single combat and was promoted from G rank straight to E rank because of that. Immediately after that special treatment, you took the rank up test and went right to D rank in one shot. Rumors have spread that you are the fastest adventurer to rank up in the guild in Gimuru you know? In addition to that, you're also followed by a

Griffon, a rank A monster."

".....Is that so?"

Rei didn't care much about the rumors and replied to Runo as if it was nothing much.

"That is.....no, ahh, I guess that's why you're so well known."

Runo shook his head and sighed as he looked at Rei.

"So, what are you doing in the guild today? From the looks of it, it doesn't look like you've come to take a request."

"Ahh, I'm here to sell materials and submit proofs of subjugation. Aside from that, the number of monsters I have to strip materials from is quite difficult to do by myself, so I am submitting a request to the guild to help strip materials."

"Heh? Where did you take down so many monsters?"

When Runo asked, interested in why Rei had so many monsters he had to strip materials from, Rei answered with a bitter smile.

"At a dungeon. The one that you and Goblin Drool went to."

".....Seriously. Aren't you going solo? No, even if you have a Griffon, did you really go down the dungeon by yourself?"

"No, I took up a nominated request. I was acting as an escort. So, the person I was escorting just told me I could do whatever I wanted with all the monsters that we took down."

"Haa.....that's a very generous client. So, what about the dead monsters? Did you have a hard time taking that many back?"

Runo's eyes flashed for a moment as he smelled money and he asked Rei. But Rei just showed him the Misty Ring on his right arm while sighing.

"Have you forgotten? I have an item box. All the dead monsters are stored in this bracelet. Fortunately time doesn't flow inside this item box. Otherwise, all of them would have rotted."

".....I see. By the way, what's the reward for stripping materials?"

"What, are you going to take the request? No, I would be grateful if you did."

They knew each other and thinking back to his previous meeting with him, he didn't think that Lenora's concerns about stealing would be a problem with

Runo.

The last time they had met, Rei had easily defeated the self confident Claws of the Hawk. If he considered the consequences of earning Rei's ire, he wouldn't do anything stupid. However, Runo shrugged his shoulders as if without much expectation when he replied.

"Depends on the reward. And even if it was a large amount, it would be tough for just me alone."

Giving a sigh, Rei was about to respond when Lenora came back.

"Oh, Runo-san? Ah, come to think of it, you know each other."

Although Lenora showed a puzzled look for a moment when she saw Rei and Runo talking with each other, as expected of a guild receptionist, she immediately turned back to Rei after giving smile and a nod to Runo.

"Rei-san, about the stripping of material, it's the first time for such a request and for such a large amount of monsters as well, I can't decide what rank to set for it."

".....Is the request too difficult?"

"Yes, that's the case. If it's just stripping materials, even H rank adventurers can do it. And since the reward is quite considerable, if you extended the request to low ranking adventurers, you would probably see a large number of applicants.....however, most of them will have had no experience in stripping materials from a rank C monster. Even so, if it were to be extended to C rank adventurers, 1 gold coin would be too cheap for them to strip the materials from so many monsters.I'm sorry for previously saying the reward was too much."

Rei spoke up with a sigh as Lenora gave an apologetic bow.

"Does that mean that the guild can't put up the request?"

"Ah, no. Of course we will accept it. However, since there is no precedent in this guild, I think that we will have to contact the other guild branches to see if there has been a similar request before submitting it.....is that okay?"

".....That's fine. Fortunately, monsters won't rot as long as I keep them in the item box. I would like you to do that then. But, if possible, please decide on the rank of the request soon."

"Yes.I'm really sorry for taking up your time and effort."

"Ah well. There's always a first time for something. Hey, don't mind it too much Lenora-chan."

Maybe he didn't like the subdued atmosphere too much, Runo said that as if he was fooling around. Lenora smiled and the three of them continued talking with each other for a bit longer.

It should be said that, as usual, Kenny seemed to be envious of Lenora.

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Chapter 120

Two days after submitting a monster material stripping request to the guild, the figure of Rei could be seen in the guild as usual. However, it wasn't the time when the guild was crowded, which he disliked, but early in the morning.

After completing Elena's escort, he had taken a day off. Then yesterday, he had replenished his consumable items that been exhausted before coming to the guild today.....

"Should I say my luck is bad?"

Subjugation requests, which were the main requests Rei took, had mostly been taken by other adventurers and almost none remained.

Even if there were subjugation requests that were left, they were either rank A or rank B subjugation requests or Goblin subjugation requests, that were always around.

If Rei formed a party, he would be able to receive rank B requests. Unfortunately, Rei was a solo adventurer and could only accept requests that were one rank higher. That is to say, up to C rank.

(I hope I can rank up quickly.)

Rei thought to himself as he looked at the request board.

Rank F to D was the group with the most registered adventurers. And for that reason, there was a lot of competition to receive D rank requests.....for Rei, who was a solo adventurer, that was the most difficult problem.

Still, there were still requests that ignored ranks such as the attack on the Orc village or the nominated request in the case of Elena.

(In that case.....I should take requests that are always available such as Goblin subjugation requests to familiarise myself with the new skill Set and and I obtained. If I'm lucky, I might even encounter monsters I haven't seen before.)

While thinking like that, he turned to look at the requests that were always pinned on the board.....suddenly, one request form came to his eyes.

It was a request on the C rank board. The reward for the request was 1 gold coin and 5 silver coins. Considering the rewards for requests in the frontier city of Gimuru, this was quite a hefty reward. Rei wasn't concerned about money right now, but for some reason reason, the request form drew him in and he read on.

It was an escort request. However, the chance of being attacked by monsters or bandits close to the city was basically impossible. In addition, the client had to pay food expenses to the guards during the request. The escort duration was around 10 days. The reward was paid per day, so counting 10 days, it would become 1 platinum coin and 5 gold coins. They were looking for 5 people.

"I think it's a well paid request.....but why hasn't it been taken?"

The remuneration was high for a rank C request, and if there were no monster attacks or bandits, the escort would simply be going on an outing.

It certainly seemed too easy for a rank C request. But on the other hand, it seemed strange that no one had taken it despite such favourable terms. As he read that request, Rei felt someone standing nearby and turned to see who it was.

It was a middle-aged woman in her mid thirties. Based on her appearance, he hesitated over whether to call her a warrior. She wore a leather armour made from some monster skin with several metal pieces attached, giving a nimble feeling overall.

The woman seemed to have noticed Rei's look and turned to look at the request he had been looking at.

"Hm? What's wrong boy? Do you need something from me?"

Rei didn't think that she would ask that and was silent for a few seconds at those unexpected words. He shook his head to say that it was nothing and looked over the request again.

"Oh? Do you want to take this request boy? Rather, is your rank high enough.....no, a baby faced adventurer that wears a robe. You, could you be the rumored Rei? I heard that you have a Griffon."

"That's right. I don't know much about the rumors, but I'm definitely the

adventurer with a Griffon."

"Wow.....we've been out of Gimuru for a while. We just came back not long ago, but we already started hearing rumors immediately after entering the city. Well, it's no wonder considering you're accompanied by a Griffon."

"We..... ? "

"Mm? Ah. I'm working in a party. There, the person drinking over there."

Saying that, the woman indicated towards a man about 140cm tall who was drinking alcohol in the bar in the guild, even though it was still early in the morning. But even if he was short, he didn't feel unreliable. Rather, if Rei, who was 165cm tall, stood next to him, Rei would look less reliable. Anyhow, his body was packed with muscles and a huge hammer, 1m in length, stood out as it leaned against the table. The hammer head attached to the handle was made of a pure black metal, as if sucking in light. Even though Rei couldn't see magic power, he could still feel that it was some sort of magical metal. And what stood out more than anything else was his beard. Short with a sturdy build, a beard stretching to his chest, a drinker and using a hammer as a weapon. With those four things, Rei realised who the person in the woman's party was.

"A Dwarf"

"Correct. If I had to saying something about him, he's a heavy drinker, but his skill as a warrior is quite good."

At Rei's murmur, the woman replied.

"Oh, I haven't introduced myself yet. I'm Freon. That drunkard over there is Brazos. We're a rank C party, Crushing Warriors. Nice to meet you."

Rei shook her extended hand with a smile.

"Although you seem to know me already, I'm Rei. A solo D rank adventurer."
"Ah, my regards. So, just some advice.....the request you saw. I think it would be better for you not to take it."

For a moment, Freon glanced towards the C rank board.

"Why? You seemed to have looked at it earlier as well."

"The person giving out the request has a considerable amount of power in the city of Gimuru.....Well, to put it simply, he's one of the higher ups in the weapons market in Gimuru. Naturally, he has power to match his position. You

understand what I'm trying to say?"

Freon frowned as she saw Rei's face filled with loathing.

"I see, that is to say, he's a typical idiotic noble."

"It's worse than that. In any case, because Margrave Rowlocks is an outstanding lord, there are very few stupid nobles around. That's why this person's tyranny stands out more."

".....After hearing about that, it certainly sounds better not to take the request even though the reward is high."

"Even so, because more adventurers are becoming aware of his personality, less people are taking up his requests. No matter how much power he has, in the end, it's strictly limited to the streets of Gimuru. Once he takes a single step out of the city, his power has no effect if he is attacked by monsters or bandits. No, in the case of bandits, he might even be captured and held ransom. Well, if he was captured, there's a high chance he would just be ignored by the people here."

"In the first place, why is someone who sells weapons doing something like this? And if he's so bad, why hasn't anything been done about him?"

Rei's question to Freon was reasonable, but Freon shook her head bitterly.

"His family has managed weapons shops for several generations and while he is high handed, he also wholesales weapons made from monster materials to other cities. The taxes he pays are also quite considerable. As long as he is producing results, there won't be any serious moves to eliminate him."

".....How troublesome. Not an incompetent and idiotic noble but a capable and idiotic noble."

"That's right. As you've become very conspicuous recently, it's possible you'll come to his attention. I recommend that you don't accept any nominated requests from Bolton. Ah, incidentally, Bolton's company is written in the request form, Azoth Firm."

Hearing Freon's words, he turned to look at the request form he had been considering. The client's name was certainly Azoth Firm.

"I understand. I'll watch out for that. Thank's for your explanation."

"What, if Rei is really the adventurer as rumored, you don't need to mind my

advise that much, I might even have told you all that just so I could ask for your help if I took a difficult request.Ah, if you don't mind, I would like to introduce you to that drunkard."

For a moment, she turned to look at the Dwarf, Brazos, who was drinking heartily.

(I don't like alcohol that much but.....well, I don't have any particular requests to do right now. I'm also curious about what kind of Dwarf he is like.)

Rei thought for several seconds before nodding.

"Ahh, no problem. Anyhow, I haven't taken any requests today. I wish there was a good subjugation request I could take."

"Hahaha. I also heard from rumors that you mainly took subjugation requests. Well, we're the same as well."

".....If you have a Dwarf, couldn't you do blacksmithing requests?"

At Rei's honest question, Freon looked back with an amazed look.

"About that. Although Dwarves are usually thought of as blacksmiths, at the same time, not all Dwarves are blacksmiths you know? I mean, if all Dwarves were metalworking masters, how would they be able to live in a village.

What? Can you use a hammer to knead bread?"

".....I see."

Rei understood Freon's explanation. From the manga and novels he had read in Japan, he had been convinced that Dwarves = Blacksmith.

"Because of that, please don't talk about blacksmithing in front of Brazos. Actually, he had wanted to become a blacksmith, but it seems that he didn't make it."

As they headed towards the bar, Freon whispered quietly into his ear and Rei nodded.

It should be noted that the catkin receptionist had been watching them with a vicious look, but had been quietly suppressed by the ponytail receptionist beside her.

"Hey, Brazos. You've been drinking since early morning, that's enough. We're

going to head out for a request....."

As Freon reached the Dwarf Brazos, she started complaining with a sigh.

However, Brazos seemed to be unconcerned as he poured some sake from a small barrel into a cup, before drinking it.

"What are you saying. For Dwarves, drinking alcohol is like Humans drinking water. Freon, could I stop you from drinking water?"

"Don't be stupid. How can alcohol be treated as water. Seriously, this drunkard....."

Freon gave an amazed sigh, but at those words, Brazos smacked his cup down on to the table.

"Come on Freon. Do you think that drunkards could get get drunk from this kind of liquor? I really hope you don't underestimate me."

"Yes, yes. I know, I know. It's strange to start drinking before starting a request. I'm trying to work in a party with you."

"Keh. I think I'm just thankful to be in a party with an unmarried woman like you."

"Hey, you."

As the two of them started to argue with each other, Rei gave a sigh as he sat down on an empty seat.

Noticing Rei, Brazos stopped arguing with Freon and turned to look at him.

"Freon, who's this boy?"

"I met him a little while ago. Hey, did you hear that about that rumor since we came back to the city? The adventurer which was supposed to have a Griffon following him. He's the one."

At Freon's words, Brazos looked at Rei with interest.

When he looked at Rei, as the person himself had said, Rei couldn't feel any sense of drunkenness from him.

"Hou~, so you're the one with the Griffon.You certainly don't give off the feeling of an ordinary person."

While saying that, Brazos poured a cup of sake and held it out towards Rei.

"Here, drink first. A drink for meeting with you for the first time. It's the Dwarven style. Hahahaha."

"Ah, I don't like to drink liquor that much....."

Looking at the wooden cup, Rei gave a sigh as he turned to look at Freon.

However, Freon averted her eyes slightly and gently spoke when Rei looked towards her.

"That is, I'm sorry, but please go along with him for now. When Brazos invites you to drink, it means that he likes you."

In that way, he was made to keep them company, drinking sake until noon.

Lenora eventually rescued Rei and the other two, Freon and Brazos, started their request after finishing drinking.

It should be noted that Freon had become accustomed to Brazos's drinking and had hardly drank anything herself while Brazos didn't even look drunk. Both of them walked away with a steady gait.

.....Rei was just helplessly drunk and was unable to take any requests.

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Chapter 121

"Guh....."

As the morning sun shone on him, Rei opened his eyes in bed. But, the moment he tried to get up, he felt a dull pain in his head.

"What happened to me.....no, when did I get into bed?"

While muttering, he looked around as he held his head. What Rei saw, without doubt, was his room in the Dusk Wheat Inn.

"What happened? I was sure that I went to the guild yesterday....."

Rei tried to recall his memories. And before long, he remembered that he had met Freon, the female warrior in her thirties, and the Brazos the Dwarf. At the same time, he remembered that although he had said he wasn't too good with alcohol, he had continued to drink for several hours, unable to decline.

"That's right, I was drunk under the table.It's a good thing I was in the guild bar. If I had been in a bar downtown, I would have been more likely to run into a robber or pickpocket."

As he sighed, Rei scowled at the morning sun shining into the room from the clear autumn sky.

"This headache, I guess it's a hangover.Should I take a day off?"

While frowning at the pain in his head, he poured some water from a jug into a cup to quench his thirst.

"I heard that it's good to drink miso soup if you have a hangover.Well, there's no miso soup in this world."

After checking that he was feeling a bit better after drinking some water, he put on his Dragon Robe, and Shoes of Sleipnir, which had been taken off him without his permission, and checked that the Misty Ring and Bracelet of Magic Absorption were still tight around both his arms.He then realised that it would have been terrible if his magic items had been stolen.

"This.....I should take some measures against that."

While consolidating the image of the fire magic in his mind, he took the Death Scythe out and started to cast a spell.

『Fire, if one touches you against my will, give them scorching flames of regret.』

With those words, flames gathered around the blade of the Death Scythe..... activating the magic the next moment.

『Flame of Regret.』

At the same time as the activation of the magic, the flames disappeared as if soaking into the Misty Ring.

Against his will.....if someone tried to remove his Misty Ring while he was unconscious, like yesterday, the security effect of the magic would cause the offender to be baptised in fire.However, it wasn't just as simple as preventing theft.

After that, he fixed up his appearance and went downstairs.

Perhaps peak hour had already gone by, there were hardly any guests in the dining room. There were only several people who were having late meals.

Rei took an empty seat as he looked around. As if waiting for that, Lana, the proprietress of the Dusk Wheat, appeared.

"Good morning. It seems you got helplessly drunk yesterday, are you okay?"

While asking about that, Lana placed a light breakfast onto the table. Maybe she understood he had a hangover, there was a lot of light foods with high moisture content.

"Was I yesterday?"

"Two people, the guild receptionists Lenora-san and Kenny-san brought you in. They carried you into your room."

".....I will thank them when I go to the guild."

"Yes, that would be good."

Lana nodded with a smile and went back to work. Seeing her leave, Rei reached for his breakfast.

"Ah, Rei-san. Good morning. Are you okay?"

Lenora called out when she saw Rei enter the guild. She looked concerned, but Rei nodded, indicating he was fine.

"When I got up in the morning, the hangover was quite difficult, but it has become much better after eating breakfast."

(Thanks to Zepairu's knowledge.)

He would have never thought he would thank Zepairu over hangovers, but Rei seriously thanked him.

"So, you brought me back to the inn yesterday. Thank you very much."

Rei gave a bow. He wanted to thank Kenny as well.....but as he looked for her while thinking that, the figure of the catkin that was usually next to Lenora could not be found.

"Where's Kenny?"

"Ah, she out until the afternoon. Some errands she has to run or something."

"I see. Then, if she comes back in the afternoon, give her my thanks."

"Eh. I understand. Then, I'll do that. By the way, there's actually a summons for you....."

Lenora spoke somewhat apologetically. It was an unusual attitude for Lenora, who usually did her work quite happily.

"A summons? I don't remember being summoned by anyone though."

"Eh, that is true. However, since it's a summons from a person funding the guild administration, we can't afford not to tell you....."

"What's the reason?"

"Don't know. The guild hasn't been told anything. I've only been told to inform you."

"Who is doing such a rude thing."

At Rei's words, Lenora frowned her eyebrows slightly.

However, she wasn't frowning at Rei, but rather the person that she mentioned the next moment.

"It is the representative of the Azoth Firm, Bolton-sama."

Azoth Firm. Bolton. He was naturally familiar with those two names. Afterall, he had just heard those names yesterday.

"I heard that that guy is running something like a weapons shop in this city?"

"Yes. That is right. That is, there are various rumors about him as well..... Azoth Firm helps fund guild activities and has a hand in most weapons entering the city of Gimuru as well."

"So, the great Azoth Firm wants something from a D rank adventurer like me."

"It seems to be so. Of course, this is just a one sided demand from them, they have no right to force anything onto an adventurer registered with the guild. Therefore, it is up to your own judgement whether to respond to this summons."

Despite saying that, Lenora's expression blatantly showed that it would be better to respond to the call. Anyhow, it was a summons from a person with a lot of power in the city of Gimuru. If he refused, Lenora honestly didn't know what harassment would happen to Rei.

Rei roughly guessed it from Lenora's expression and nodded after a few seconds.

"Although I don't know what it's for yet, there's no reason to decline. There are various rumors, but it's impossible for me to say anything without meeting the person himself. I understand, I'll go.....can you tell me where Bolton's merchant house is?"

"Ah, yes. Have this."

She had probably planned to talk to Rei about this when he came in. A map to Bolton's mansion had already been prepared.

Looking down to read it, he realised it was Lenora's handwriting on the map after reading it a few times.

"Sorry about this."

"No, not at all! Normally, it would be impossible to call an adventurer to their house through the guild without a nominated request. That is.....please be careful. There are always bad rumors about him as a person."

"Ah, I heard from the two members of Crushing Warriors yesterday.That reminds me, what did those two do after yesterday?"

"What happened.....after Rei-san got helplessly drunk, I think they went out for a request?"

".....Right after?"

"Yes. Well, there are a few people who go drinking before taking a request. Nevertheless, most people still only go drinking after a request for financial reasons."

".....I see."

With no words to say, he gave a sigh before pulling himself together and shaking his head.

"Anyhow, thanks for the map. I'll be leaving now."

"Yes. Please take care. Ah, please wait a bit longer for the request for stripping materials."

"I understand."

As Lenora gave a bow, she still felt uneasy about Rei.

(.....I can't tell Kenny about this.)

She thought to herself. Anyhow, Kenny seemed to be strangely attached to Rei recently. If she heard that he had been directly summoned by the president of the Azoth Firm, which had a bad reputation, it could cause various outbursts.

(Well, I understand those feelings though.)

Certainly, Azoth Firm had made large contributions to the guild. However, she cannot help but feel unpleasant that they were being used like a shield. But in the end, the sad point was that after donating funds for guild activities for so long, they had to listen to his demands up to a certain point.

She hoped strange problems wouldn't occur between Rei and Azoth Firm. Lenora could only pray in her mind.

Leaving the adventurer guild, Rei went to pick up Set, who should be waiting at the carriage spaces as usual. However.....

"Set-chan, you're looking lovely today. Here, eat this as well."

"Gurururu~"

He also saw Milein, stroking Set's head and back, while holding a large amount of sandwiches and meat skewers that she had bought from the nearby food stalls.

"Milein.....you, you've come to see Set quite often recently, did Scorching Wind break up?"

Usually, Milein would take a while to realise Rei was here when she was with Set. But this time, she threw a meat, cheese and lettuce sandwich to Rei.

"Uh!"

Rei took it while being careful not to crush it and bit down where sauce was starting to drip out.

The outside was baked fragrantly while the meat inside was juicy, blending together and delighting Rei's taste buds.

"You, can you not say something so unlucky? We've been busy lately, so we decided to take a weekend off. And don't just eat that without asking. It's a popular food."

Without caring for Milein's reproachful look, Rei quickly ate the sandwich.

"Then don't throw it. I had dodged it, it would have fallen to the ground or it might have been crushed when I caught it."

While muttering in amazement, Rei quickly finished the Sandwich.

"So, did you pick a request Rei?"

He shook his head slightly at Milein while stroking Set's back with a smile.

"About that. It's not a request.....but I got a summons from the president of Azoth Firm."

".....You, did you do something?"

"No, nothing that I know of. It's just that.....there seem to be rumors about me recently. I think he just wants to see who I am with his own eyes?"

".....Is that okay? Azoth Firm doesn't have a good reputation you know?"

"It seems to be so. Some adventurers I met yesterday said the same thing. So, Set. What will you do? Would you like to come with me?"

When Rei asked Set, who was eating a sandwich, Set naturally tried to get up.....

"Could you not take Set-chan along with you?"

Milein stopped them while saying that.

"Why? The rumors that the other party would have heard would include me and Set, that's probably the reason I was summoned."

"I know. That might certainly be the case, but thinking about that.....there's also the possibility he wants to do something to Set."

Milein frowned her eyes slightly. From that, it was obvious that Milein didn't have a good impression of Azoth Firm.

"Guru~....."

Maybe he felt uneasy seeing Milien like this, Set gave a cry as if asking if she was okay.

"Will that happen? Set right now is a rather famous person in the city of Gimuru. No, he's not a person. If he tried to do something to Set, he would just turn the city's residents into his enemies right?"

"That is true. I think so as well.But, Azoth Firm will do it without hesitation.....or rather, Bolton will."

Milein spoke up again while giving a small sigh.

"A few years ago, some adventurer had a dispute with Azoth Firm. It seems it started due to a mistake in communication about an escort request and the adventurer's friend was killed by a monster.Then, Azoth Firm applied some pressure behind the scenes by preventing anyone from selling weapons to him. You know how important weapons are to adventurers? The adventurer couldn't do anything and gave up.....it seems he ended up leaving the city."

"That's nasty."

Rei unintentionally muttered that at Milein's words.

Preventing weapons from being sold to adventurers. In essence, that meant stopping the adventurer from taking requests. If the adventurer was a mage, they would be able to manage somehow. But for a warrior who would need to repair their weapons often.....

"That's right, you shouldn't bring Set-chan alone to stop him from getting involved with that place."

".....That's true. Set, I'm sorry, but could you wait for me here?"

"Gurururu~"

While watching Rei anxiously, Set nodded.

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Chapter 122

Relying on the map that Lenora had given him, Rei walked through the city of Gimuru. Basically, if he was in the area around the guild, where all the adventurers gathered, he wouldn't get lost. However, Rei was now heading towards where all the big merchants, the rich people and the nobles lived. You could call it the upperclass area.

"Come to think of it, this is my first time coming to this area."

Rei muttered as he walked around the streets with his map.

As expected of the upperclass, unlike other roads where dirt was exposed, it was all paved with stone here. There was hardly any litter around either. Occasionally, he would find random garbage that had been thrown onto the ground, but here, people were professionally hired to clean that up.

In addition, the roadsides that were not paved with stone had all sorts of trees planted. It was completely different from the guild area, which could be called simple and robust.

There were no street stalls, and although it wasn't a substitute, several soldiers could be seen standing guard as gatekeepers in front of each house. Or rather, since they were nobles and merchants, they were probably their own private guards.

(.....The guard may even be tighter than the one around Margrave Rowlock's residence.)

While watching the private guards patrolling, Rei thought to himself.

But that wasn't just for show. Gimuru was a frontier city and there were many adventurers. And as the number of adventurers increases, so does the number of malicious ones. It wasn't common for some to group with others to become bandits, it wasn't unusual either. It wasn't a strange scene to see wealthy people hire their own guards to counter that.

With Daska governing the city of Gimuru, as it wasn't bad enough that it was necessary to send soldiers and knights to guard the upperclass areas, there was

a tacit consent that they could hire private soldiers as guards.

As Rei walked into the area wearing his robe, he didn't attract too much attention as it was clear he was an adventurer.

"Boy, do you have any business here?"

The first person to call out to him was a man in his twenties, wearing a light leather armour which had been dyed green. A long sword hung at his waist and he looked to be in his late twenties.

Behind the man who called out, there were several more men, all of them wearing the same green dyed armour.

Perhaps they were all hired by the same noble or rich person.

Rei showed them the map that Lenora had given him.

"I was invited to meet the president of Azoth Firm. If you know where this place on the map is, please tell me."

Maybe it was because he asked that confidently, the men's wariness of him lessened somewhat. If they had just come over to see who he was and he had ran away, they might have thought he panicked because he had done something.

"This is.....Bolton-san's mansion. Go straight along this street and you will see it on your right. The roof is completely gold, so you should see it at first glance."
".....Gold?"

At the man's words, Rei unintentionally asked.

Several houses could be seen from where he was now, but most of them had plain coloured roofs. There was a gold one? He wondered to himself.

Guessing what Rei was thinking, the man gave a strained laugh.

"Well, that's right. When someone gets rich, they look at things differently than us."

".....I see."

At the man's remark, Rei nodded in agreement.

Maybe the man expected that reaction, He patted Rei's head, that was

covered by his robe.

"Let's just say that. Well, anyway, you will reach that mansion if you go straight along this road. We have to leave because we're patrolling, don't make a fuss around here. It will become troublesome if that happens."

Seeing the man wave his hand lightly as he left, Rei gave a sigh and continued down the street as the man had told him.

".....This certainly is the upperclass area."

Building on both sides of the street were built excellently and most of them were bigger than the Dusk Wheat inn, which Rei was staying in. Even if it was just a mansion, the further down he walked, the more expensive they became. For example, on the walls around the mansion that Rei had just walked past were all engraved with a complex wind pattern. Further back behind it, similar designs were built into every building.

Rei continued walking for another 20 minutes. If anything, the mansion was built at the farthest end of the upperclass area.

"Gold.....is it."

Rei spoke those word unintentionally as he looked at the roof of the mansion.

The residences around it looked quite normal, so the mansion with the golden roof stood out all the more. However, it only stood out in a bad way.

And in front of the gate leading to the mansion, there was a gatekeeper standing there with a spear, similar to the other mansions.

(Well, there's no use just looking. I should just go and finish this up quickly.)

Thinking to himself, he walked towards the gate.

Before long, the guard noticed Rei and looked at him suspiciously as he came closer.

As they looked at each other, Rei went closer.....and stopped before the gatekeeper.

"Is this the mansion of the president of Azoth Firm, Bolton?"

".....That's right, what business do you have little kid? Bolton-sama is busy. He

has no time to care about people like you."

When the man standing to the right of the gate said that, the man standing to the left of the gate also spoke up.

"From your age, you're having difficulty working as an adventurer and have come here to see if Azoth Firm would hire you, right? But Azoth Firm is a place where the elite gather. The door isn't wide enough to hire children like you."

At those words, Rei's cheeks started to twitch, but in the end, he still spoke out.

"I have received a summons from the president of Azoth Firm, is this your attitude towards visitors?"

"Ahh? A brat like you was summoned by Bolton-san? That's a joke I can't even laugh at."

The man in metal armour standing to the right of the gate directed the tip of his spear at Rei while speaking crankily.

On the left side, the other armoured man clicked his tongue at his fellow gatekeeper's sudden action, but he still pointed his spear at Rei before speaking out.

".....That guy is overdoing it, but it's our job to keep out people like you. Anyway, Azoth Firm is a pretty big company in the city of Gimuru and we deal with almost all the weapons trade here. We can't let any suspicious people through. Can you just go home?"

"Hey, Sakant. You're too kind. Every time we talk to these guys, as long as we show a gap, they will try to get in. Your kindness is unnecessary."

"Fader, you're too noisy. You had a terrible time in your previous job because you kept making a mess didn't you? You can cause a commotion if you want, but at least do it without dragging me into it."

When the man called Sankant told Fader, Fader clicked his tongue and glared at Rei.

"Heard that, brat? You have until I count down from 10 to leave, otherwise my spear will taste blood."

At those threatening words, Rei sighed.

"I get it, you want me to go home right? Then I'll leave."

Saying that, Rei turned to walk back the way he came. He said that in a regretful tone, but he had a bright smile as he walked away.

(At the very least, I went to Bolton's mansion. Since I was sent away, even if I am blamed for it, I can give an excuse.Well, although I heard it from Freon yesterday and Milein today, I wouldn't have thought it was like this unless I came here. Anyway, it would be good if he could just forget about me.....he might cause a fuss though.)

Rei left the upperclass area as he muttered to himself.

Sakant breathed a sigh of relief as he saw that it didn't become a big issue. Fader, on the other hand, was displeased at the disappearance of a suitable person to vent his violent impulses on.

"You know. If you caused a commotion, I would be collateral you know? You shouldn't get so excited over fighting a kid."

"I know already. However, I just did that on reflex when I saw that brat's eyes."

".....Fader, you don't possibly have some strange disease or something do you?"

"What do you mean by that!"

Sakant took a step back as Fader shouted back.

Time flowed on into night. The seasons had already changed to autumn and the sun set quickly. For that reason, the city of Gimuru was already covered in darkness although the 6pm bell had just rang. Although lamps started to come on here and there, even so, it was only a slight resistance against the overwhelming darkness.

However, there were several places in the city of Gimuru where the lights lit up brightly. One was the lord's residence in the heart of Gimuru. Another was the bars where adventurers celebrated the day's work. There was also the brothels, where men gathered, seeking warmth from a lover for the night. And then, there was the upperclass area, where the lights shone brightly, as if to show that they were different from the poor commoners.

Among the mansions in that area, a shouting voice echoed through a

secluded area in one of the mansions.

"Ehh! Why hasn't that adventurer called Rei obeyed my orders! I should have told him through the guild to show his face here today!"

A cup was thrown against a wall in anger. The cup that shattered and liquor that was inside fell onto the high class carpet.

Whether it was the carpet, the thrown cup or the amber liquor, their worth enough for a commoner couple to live for several years. But the man who threw it didn't care about that as he irritably placed his weight on a chair.

The backrest of the chair took his weight with a creaking sound, but the man's irritation still didn't settle.

The man, who could almost be referred to as an elder, didn't look like the president of a company. Despite having reached his sixties, there was an energetic light in his eyes and he had an arrogant looking face. He believed from the bottom of his heart that it was only natural that people did what he told them to do.

This man was Bolton, the president of Azoth Firm, which was the sole distributor of weapons in the city of Gimuru.

Several maids who were in the room avoided his gaze as they cleaned up the cup and liquor that had shattered and spilled onto the walls and floor. Bolton watched them in irritation before giving a snort and pouring more liquor into a new glass, drinking it in a single gulp.

"Hey! It seems like that adventurer Rei doesn't move easily. Take some people and bring him to me! Fine, you're just an adventurer.....does a D rank adventurer think that he can ignore my orders. Drag him here to teach him a lesson!"

Perhaps seeing he was drunk, the butler beside him spoke to Bolton, who was shouting with a red face.

"Master-sama. I heard that the adventurer called Rei has a Griffon. Speaking of Griffons, I heard that it is an A rank monster. At most, the adventurers hired by Azoth Firm are only B rank. I don't think they will be able to oppose a Griffon."

"Ahh!? What's that? It's fine to keep licking the shoes of a D rank adventurer!?"

"I didn't say that. According to rumors I heard, Rei had received a nominated request from Margrave Rowlocks. Naturally, he has some relations with the lord. You should refrain from doing anything too violent....."

"Tch, I see. So there's a possibility of him sticking his hand in."

He clicked his tongue and slammed the cup in his hand against the table like a brick before pouring more liquor into the empty cup.

It was a pricey liquor that most ordinary people couldn't afford, but Bolton didn't seem to care as he poured it down his throat like water.

"Though I summoned him through the guild, he ignored me.....it can't be helped. Hey, get some adventurers we hired to look for Rei tomorrow. Since there's a Griffon.....no, wait. That's right, if he doesn't come tomorrow, tell him he won't be able to buy weapons in Gimuru."

"Master-sama.....as I said earlier, as long as he has a connection with the lord, openly threatening him like that....."

"Tch, there's no choice. Just do enough to make him feel it."

"Certainly, I understand. I'll give the orders."

After the butler gave a bow and left the room, Bolton gulped down more liquor in frustration.

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Chapter 123

"Are you Rei?"

As he left the inn as usual and was about to head for the guild, two men appeared and questioned Rei.

Although he had the tone of wanting to confirm, their eyes indicated that they were sure he was the person they were looking for.

After all, he was the adventurer with the Griffon, so they couldn't have mistaken him.

Set ate a skewer while giving a cheerful cry. Rei nodded at the two men, who had been glancing at Set.

"Ah."

Seeing Rei nod, the two men looked at each other before one of them spoke again.

"Bolton-san of Azoth Firm has summoned you. Follow me."

When the leader, a warrior in his thirties, told him that.....

"I refuse."

The man was at a loss for words at Rei's reply.

"What!?"

Indeed that was an unexpected reply. They were at a loss for words.

That was to be expected. They were hired by one of the leading merchants in Gimuru and the one that dealt with all the weapon sales. Ordinary cities aside, the city of Gimuru was a frontier city and there were a lot of adventurers. As a result, there were many weapon shops to supply weapons to adventurers. They didn't expect to be refused by someone like this.

"Is that all? I'll be on my way then."

Rei saw the men stop at his unexpected reply and kept going with Set.....

"Wait. You, do you know who Bolton-san is!?"

"Ah. You just said it earlier yourself, he's from Azoth Firm."

"That's right! Then you know what happens if you refuse his summons right!?"

"That reminds me. I was summoned yesterday and went to the upperclass district and was driven away by the gatekeeper. Why should I respond to his summons again?"

".....What?"

The man was stunned at Rei's word. Seeing that, Rei laughed in his mind and was about to leave with Set. But.....

"Please wait a moment. Regarding that matter, it is certainly our fault. It was rude of us after summoning you. My apologies."

When he saw the leader of the two bow his head deeply, as expected, he couldn't just ignore them.

(.....That was a bit unexpected. From the rumors I had heard, I had thought Bolton or Azoth Firm would be the type to abuse their authority and forcibly get their way.)

He stopped and gave a sigh. If they had been high handed again, he would have just ignored them and head on to the guild. But now, if he ignored the older man, who was wearing high quality equipment, Rei would be seen as the bad person.

"Wait, Galahat-san. There's no need to bow your head to such a brat!"

One of the men, who was holding a halberd, spoke out to his leader — Galahat — who was bowing his head.

"He was summoned but the gatekeeper drove him away despite that. No matter how you look at it, this is not right. It is natural to apologise."

"But that's not Galahat-san's fault, it's the gatekeepers'.....hey, you! Do you know how this is? He's a rank B adventurer, Galahat-san. Don't make someone like that bow his head to you."

He decided saying anymore would be pointless. The one who called out to Galahat turned towards Rei with a scowl.

"Murt! We are inviting him, so show a proper attitude!"

"But!"

At Galahat's reprimand, the man with the halberd — Murt — tried to say something before clicking his tongue and diverted his eyes.

"That was rude of me. If it's convenient for you, could you come with me now? I promise not to let anything unpleasant happen like yesterday."

"Gururu~?"

What do we do? Rei gave a sigh and stroked Set, who seemed to ask as he tilted his head.

"Okay. I can't decline after this much."

(If he had been like Murt, I would have refused immediately and not waste any more time.....I didn't think someone like Galahat would be in Azoth Firm with its bad reputation. In the end it's pointless to judge people on rumors along. Then, maybe Bolton may not be as bad as the rumors about him.....in that sense, I should meet with him at least once.)

"Ahh, that's a great help. I'll guide you there at once. Follow me."

Galahat, ahead with a smile, followed by Murt, Rei and Set.

"Seriously, Galahat-san told me to stop so I'll leave it at that. You'll be crushed if you think that you can do what you want just because you're famous. Not every adventurer is as broadminded as Galahat-san."

Murt called out to Rei as they walked. He seemed to be dissatisfied that the person he respected had to bow his head to a child. He looked at Rei in dissatisfaction without hiding it.

"In the first place, if Azoth Firm had let me in yesterday, there wouldn't have been an issue. Isn't it unreasonable for you to blame me for that?"

"Ahh!?"

Although Murt glared at him when he heard that.....

"Murt!"

He was reprimanded by Galahat, who was walking ahead, before he could reply.

(Indeed, Murt won't go against Galahat. I don't know if it's because he trusts him or because he admires him though.)

Thinking to himself, he followed after Galahat. Eventually, he reached the upperclass district that he had visited yesterday.

And as Rei walked down the same street as yesterday, he saw a few male adventurers walking ahead.....

"-!?"

Seeing Galahat's group.....or rather after seeing Set, their looks hardened for a moment before sighing in relief.

"Hey, it's Galahat-san. Is that the rumored guy with the Griffon?Mm? I say, you're the one from yesterday....."

The man called out to Galahat, who was walking at the front of the group, but immediately noticed a familiar face. This was because they had met just yesterday.

"What, boy. Do you have more business at Azoth Firm today?"

When he said that, Rei finally remembered who the men before him were.

"I met you around here yesterday....."

"Ah. No, wait. That Griffon over there, are you possibly the adventurer in the recent rumors?"

"I can roughly guess what the rumors are, but you're not wrong. Your equipment seems to be different from what you wore yesterday though."

When Rei had met them yesterday, they had all been wearing green leather armour. But now, some were wearing metal armour or a mantle. Some were still wearing leather armour, but no one was wearing the green armour from yesterday.

You probably noticed Ray's gaze. The man opens his mouth with a bitter smile.

"That equipment was prepared by the person who hired me. It seems that he wanted something like his own knights. While I was hired, I was contracted to wear matching armour."

"Is it different now?"

"Ah well. My contract ended yesterday, so I can wear my own equipment from

today on."

"Rei, you know these people?"

Galahat saw the two of them talking with each other causally and asked, but the other man spoke up before Rei.

"I don't know him too well. But when he was looking around here yesterday, I told him the location of Bolton-san's mansion."

"That is.....I see. My apologies."

"What? Why are you apologising?"

The man was confused by Galahat, who suddenly bowed his head.

"No, Rei actually went to Bolton-san's mansion yesterday.....but it seems the gatekeepers turned him away. Because of that, we've bothered you twice. Though you told him the way yesterday, it ended up being pointless in the end." "Ahh, I don't mind. You've taken care of me for a lot things. This isn't a big deal."

At the man's words, the men behind him nodded as well.

(It seems this Galahat is quite popular. It seems Murt's admiration isn't out of place.)

Looking at them, Galahat's evaluation rose in Rei's mind.

"Well then, we'll be off to the guild to collect our reward. Also, Galahat-san. Don't let Murt give you a hard time."

"Ah. You take care as well."

"I know. When your request is over, come over to the guild to collect your reward and have a drink with us."

While he spouted complaints at them, there seemed to be some familiarity between Murt and the men.

"Are you close to them?"

Seeing Murt like that, Rei asked Galahat.

From Rei's point of view, Murt was one of those muscle brained adventurers. He admired Galahat who was stronger than him and took care of him, at the same time, he looked down on Rei, who looked weaker than him. With such a

personality, he didn't think he would look at others he wasn't familiar with such friendliness.

"—Mm? Ah, about that. He's a reasonably skilled adventurer. I think he was definitely rank C."

Continuing their conversation, they continued walking down the street towards Bolton's mansion.

"Heh~. What's the name of his party? Though I don't know about him, I do know of rank C parties like Scorching Wind and Crushing Warriors."

"No, he hasn't formed a party. He just happened to take a request together with the other people this time. He either joins different parties or goes solo."

".....Isn't that unusual?"

Although effort was required to form a party, it was surprising that he would rather go solo than form a party. Rei looked towards Galahat with a surprised expression.

"It certainly is unusual. However, each adventurer has their own circumstances, so it's not something we should worry about.Well then, you can see it now."

Ahead of Galahat, Rei could see the golden roof. As before the gate were the same two gatekeepers.

Seeing them approach, the two gatekeepers glared at them and raised their spears like yesterday.....

"Ah, Galahat-san."

Seeing Galahat at the front, they breathed in a sigh of relief and lowered the tips of their spears.

"That? Isn't that the brat from yesterday....."

The gatekeepers noticed Rei in the group and spoke up in confusion.

Looking at them with cold eyes, Galahat spoke up.

"This is Rei. He should have come here yesterday, right?"

"Eh, yes. He said he wanted Azoth Firm to hire him."

"No, I don't recall saying such things."

Rei cut off Fader, who was trying to brush it off.

"Guh-, s-shut up brat! What did you come here for today!"

Afraid that he would be put into a bad position, he pointed the tip of his spear at Rei.....

"GURURURURURU~!"

Set moved in front of Rei and gave a belligerent cry as he glared at Fader with his sharp eyes.

Set's eyes, which were usually round and sweet, had turned into dangerous eyes when he looked at the enemy.

"Hii, Hiii~!"

Being glared at head on by Set, Fader edged back until he bumped into Sakant, stopping him.

"Fool. Rei is someone who Bolton-san summoned directly. You drove him away at your own selfish judgement. In other words, he's Bolton-san's guest.The point is, you should have known about that but forgot about it."

"That is.....I didn't think such a brat could be Bolton-san's guest....."

Fader desperately tried to smooth over it, but Sakant realised that they had made a grave mistake and had a pensive expression. Seeing the contrasting expression on the two, Galahat spoke out. However, not towards Sakant and Fader, but Murt.

"Listen up. If you act however you want to, remember that you may commit mistakes that can't be fixed like this."

"Yes."

"And Rei. I'm sorry for making you feel unwelcome, I'm sorry. I'll discipline these two properly so I hope you'll forgive them."

"Well, if Galahat says so, then that's fine."

"Then, once again. Welcome to the Bolton mansion."

Galahat gave an elegant bow that did not seem to be a gesture an adventurer could make.

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Chapter 124

"Give me your magic items."

That was Bolton's request to Rei after meeting him for the first time.

After the troubles with the gatekeepers, he had to wait a while before he was brought to Bolton's room for their meeting.....

But, Bolton said that as soon as he saw Rei enter the room.

On a side note, Set had been lying down on the front lawn after seeing Rei enter the mansion. He enjoyed the autumn sun as if the two frightened gatekeepers didn't exist.

".....What?"

"Didn't you hear me? The magic items you have. Specifically, your shoes and that scythe. And above all, give me your item box."

Is this guy crazy? While thinking about that, Rei looked at the man sitting in front of him.

He left Rei, his guest, just standing there while he was seated. Speaking of his appearance, you could say he was an old man. However, he wasn't an ordinary old man, but an old man who would greedily keep looking for more power and money. As if to match that, his build was rather solid and made him look somewhat younger than he was.

(In other words, this old guy is causing problems by not letting go of his power.)

While thinking to himself, he just silently looked back at the old man seated before him, who was looking at him.

Regarding the item box, it wasn't strange that he knew about it as Rei hadn't kept it a secret since he came to Gimuru. The same was true for the Death Scythe. But.....

(He knows about the Shoes of Sleipnir, does he.)

There weren't that many people who knew about them. The most likely possibility was that some information had leaked from the adventurers who had went with him for the Orc village subjugation.....

(Well, there's no point thinking about it now. Now then, what's wrong with this old man?)

As Rei thought about how to deal with the person in front of him, who believed that his words always had to be obeyed, a voice hastily spoke up.

"Please wait! Bolton-san, did you ask us to get him for this?"

It was Galahat, who had brought Rei here.

He had a look of reproach in his eyes as he looked at Bolton. But.

"Who said you could open your mouth. The child of a mistress should act like one and do as he's told."

Without even glancing at Galahat, Bolton cut him short and ignored him.

Rei could here the sound of Murt, who was standing near him, grinding his teeth.

(A child of a mistress? I see, it seems their family is quite complex.)

Rei compared Bolton and Galahat as he thought to himself.

One was in his sixties, the other was in his thirties. Looking at the difference in age, even if they were half brothers, they were still thirty years apart. As expected, Rei could not help but be surprised.

".....Pardon me."

Galahat repressed his feelings as he spoke and backed down. Giving a snort as if dealing with some trivial matter, Bolton then turned to look at Rei again.

"That's enough about the magic items. I can make better use of them than you ever can. If you understand that, quickly give them to me. Ah, that Griffon you're rearing. Leave it behind as well. After selling it or killing it, materials can be stripped from it. It's a shame to leave it with an adventurer."

Rei's cheeks twitched at those words. His gaze towards Bolton had already changed from amazement to a cold look and finally to as if he was looking at a

stone on the roadside. Yes, just like a stone that he would barely remember even if he crushed it with his foot.

"What's wrong? Hurry up. I'm busy unlike adventurers like you. Don't waste my time."

"....."

Silently, he opened the Misty Ring's list in his mind and took out the Death Scythe.

"Ohh, so that is the rumored large scythe. You can tell that it's of the finest quality just by looking at it!"

Bolton raised a rare voice of admiration after seeing the Death Scythe.

Certainly, the man called Bolton had the eyes of a first class merchant. While most people who saw the Death Scythe thought it was just a large scythe, he could say that it was a magic item without any hesitation. Because he could tell that it could be used to cast magic.

Still, he hadn't heard much about Rei as a person. Among the adventurers in the city of Gimru, it was already recognised that his partner was something they couldn't touch.

Rei spun the Death Scythe in his hand and swung the handle out toward Bolton. And as he moved.....

"Stop!"

Galahat realised what Rei was going to do and dashed forward to stand in front of Bolton.

Roar-!

The handle of the Death Scythe hit him with full force.

He thought that he could parry the handle with his sword. But.....

"Gaah~!"

Galahat had thought the weight of the Death Scythe to be that of an ordinary spear and was blown away as the sword he had used to block it was broken.

Even though he was a big man in his thirties and wearing leather armour

instead of metal armour, he destroyed the wall that was behind him as he flew back, going across the corridor and destroying the wall of the room opposite before coming to a stop. Murt was unable to keep up with the sequence of events and could only watch as he was shocked by the power behind that attack.

Galahat's mistake was due to Rei's appearance. Even though Rei was a much talked about adventurer, in the end, the rumors only said that he was followed by an A rank monster, Griffon. He was only about 160cm tall, didn't look to have much muscle and seemed weak. But, the result was that he was knocked through to a second room and now couldn't move due to his injuries.

"....."

Rei looked at the destroyed wall for only a moment. Thinking that Rei's pause was an opportunity, Bolton started shouting in his arrogant manner.

"Y-You. What are you doing all of a sudden! Do you know who I am!"
".....Will you get in my way?"

Ignoring Bolton's shrill shouting, Rei glanced at Murt behind him.

"-!?"

The moment Rei looked at him, Murt shook his head vigorously on reflex. He couldn't win by himself. On the contrary, he felt like an insect walking by the roadside that could be trampled at any time.

".....I see. Then."

As soon as Rei saw that Murt didn't intend to do anything, he looked away. He turned to Bolton, who's face had gone blue and red in fear and anger.

"Hey, a-are you listening! Do you know what will happen if this outrage you committed gets out!"

"I don't really care. These kind of looks, and disdain, I've experienced many times since coming to the city of Gimuru."

Rei spoke up, as if ignoring Bolton's words.

"Besides, it's not the first time someone has aimed for my magic items. Like Dark Night's Star."

That party had tried to rob Rei's Misty Ring, and as a result, there were annihilated by Rei in the Orc village.

"However, my Griffon.....Set, what did you say you would do to my partner? Sell him? Kill and strip materials from him?"

In his hands, he spun the Death Scythe, any furniture in the room the the blade touched was broken, sliced and destroyed. As he spun the Death Scythe, in his hands, he took one step, one more step towards Bolton, who was sitting in his chair and couldn't move.

"You, you-! You're just an adventurer, do you think you can go against me in this city of Gimuru! I'm the president of Azoth Firm!"

"What about it? Then try protecting yourself with the power of Azoth Firm. Look, your death is nearing now isn't it?"

The speed of the spinning Death Scythe in his hand grew faster. To begin with, the Death Scythe already had enough power to knock Galahat away even after he tried to parry it. Now, Rei was increasing its power further by spinning it. To his horror, Bolton finally realised that he had stepped on the tiger's tail that he should never have stepped on.

However, it was already too late. The existence that brought death was already in front of Bolton's desk.....yes, in the case of emergencies, if he were attacked by thugs or assassins, it was a special desk that could shield him against attacks if he hid under it. But the Death Scythe cut through it like a hot knife through bread.

"Hii~.....Hiii~!"

As Bolton started to scream.

".....Please, wait a moment."

Suddenly.....a voice called out faintly but surely. The whirlwind of death stopped moving a few centimeters from Bolton's face, which had been distorted by fear.

The person that appeared along with the sound of a wall collapsing was Galahat, who had been blown away to the next room by Rei a few minutes earlier.

The leather armour that was supposed to protect his body had been shredded by the impact, after taking that attack, there was no way he was okay. His ribs had broken and injured his internal organs. If he wasn't moving, his complexion was pale enough that he could be mistaken for a corpse. At the same time, there were traces of blood around the edges of his mouth. It seems he had wiped away the blood that he had spit out.

But even so.....after all that, Galahat was still alive. He could even move despite tanking an attack from Rei's Death Scythe where he hadn't held back. Even if it was an attack from the handle and not the blade, there was still the weight of the Death Scythe and Rei's strength. With an attack that combined the two, he would have already died if he had been an ordinary person.

Seeing the state of Galahat, Rei, who was about to dispose of Bolton, had an expression of surprise.

"Please. That person.....spare my older brother's life."

However, the surprise disappeared in a moment after Galahat's words.

"Why would you protect him? He's lived long enough for no benefit."

"N-!"

No one had probably ever said those words to his face. Bolton tried to refute those words on reflex but was cut short by Galahat. Yes, the person before him was a reaper that easily take his life. If he spoke something carelessly, Bolton knew that his head would be separated from his body immediately.

"Even such a person.....it's only one parent, but he's my older brother by blood.Gufo~"

It seems that forcing himself to move had given him some internal injuries. He spat out some blood. But he disregarded that as he couldn't stop now. He spoke as blood leaked out his mouth.

"That aside, even if he's such a brother.....he has built up a high status in the city of Gimuru, that's a fact. If you kill him.....a bounty will be placed on you and you will be chased by the guild.....that will happen."

He couldn't not help his brother. Galahat came to that conclusion immediately. It would be in Rei's interests if he didn't do anything here. It was a

decision as expected of a B rank adventurer. A troublesome future passed through Rei's mind as a thought and he drew the Death Scythe back slightly as he scowled.

"However, if I leave him here, won't he try to do something to me again? If I consider that, it would be better to dispose of him earlier."

".....Stop. I will stop him. Even if my older brother does something, I will definitely stop him. So.....can you just overlook it, just this time."

It was like a storm had raged through Bolton's office. In that room where almost no intact furniture was left, Rei and Galahat's gazes crossed.

Murt, who was unable to stand up at the entrance to the room and Bolton, who was frozen in fear in his chair. Leaving those two people alive.....before long, Rei gave a sigh and stored the Death Scythe into the Misty Ring.

Knowing what that action meant, Galahat's pale face had a look of relief.

"Just this once. I will overlook this just this once. So you hold your promise that you will never do anything to meddle with me or Set after this."

".....Sorry....."

The acute pain had probably got to him. Squeezing those words out, he collapsed to the floor.

"Galahat-!"

Although Murt was unable to stand up due to fear, he still crawled towards Galahat. Rei left the room as there was no need to keep looking.

.....From behind, Bolton glared at him with hatred.

Chapter 125

"Don't joke around!"

A man's angry voice reverberated through the room.

It was in a room in Bolton's mansion. It wasn't the room that Rei had raged in during the day. However, the current room desolated to such an extent that it wasn't much different from the room Rei had destroyed earlier. Just a few hours ago, it had been properly organised, clean and well maintained.....now, chairs had been broken by the master of the mansion, Bolton. Curtains were ripped, paintings on the wall trampled and vases with decorative flowers shattered. And.....

"This is who I am! This is what rank D immature brats are to me! Don't look down on me! Shut up! I know what you're thinking!"

"Hii~! Forgive me.....please...master....."

With an irritated voice, Bolton swung down a riding whip at a maid in her late teens who served in the mansion.

Her clothing was torn by the impact of the whip and her skin split, revealing raw flesh. The odour of blood drifted through the room due to the blood flowing to the floor. Sniffing that smell, a murky light appeared in Bolton's eyes as he took pleasure in the violence and swung the whip again.

Bolton's physique was unfortunate for the maid being whipped. Normally, Bolton could be called an elder as he was past middle aged. However, his build was still strong. Because he swung the whip with all his strength, it wasn't something the maid could bear.

"Gi-.....ga-!"

She couldn't even say a word and could make feeble intermittent sounds at each strike of the whip. After seeing that the maid had already lost consciousness, he rang a bell that was in the room.

And after a few seconds.

"Bolton-sama, you called?"

"Take this thing away. Ah, treat her appropriately. It will be annoying if she dies. Although that Daska is a noble, he's unsparing regarding commoners."

"Yes!"

"So, what have you found about him?"

Throwing the whip in his hand to the floor, he headed for the room opposite.

The butler hastily gave instructions to his subordinate to treat the maid before following after Bolton and speaking up so as to not offend him.

"It has only been a few months since he first showed up in the city of Gimuru. According to rumors, he's an apprentice to a remarkable magician. He was told to acquire experience as an adventurer he to complete his training.....is what I've been told."

"Hmph, I guess. If there was an adventurer with a Griffon in Gimuru for a long time, the rumors would have been spreading too slowly."

"After that, he registered with the guild, following his master's instructions. He seems to have taken subjugation requests mainly."

Bolton sat down in a chair at the back of the room and let the butler continue his report.

It had been several hours since Rei had left Bolton's mansion. This was the information that the butler had collected in this short time.

After all, his information network included all the weapon shops in Gimuru, so information on Rei could be gathered without much effort.

"I see. So he also participated in the Orc village subjugation because of that."

Giving a low mutter, he poured some liquor into a glass and drank it in one gulp while urging the butler to continue.

"Puwah~-. So, his strength.....no, I don't need to hear it."

At that moment, the fear of death that he had tasted earlier went through his mind. Because Rei could make him fear that much, his strength was not low.

Muttering that, he felt a sense of discomfort.

"Wait. He is a magician's apprentice.....did you say?"

"Yes. It is unclear who he was the apprentice of, but his master seemed to be a recluse and the two lived by themselves along with the Griffon."

"That guy didn't use magic when he tried to kill me though? But he had a magic casting tool....."

Saying that, he recalled the magic casting tool that Rei had.

Speaking of magic casting tools, there were usually rods or rings. Though rarer, there were also earrings, but what they all had in common was that they were all purely magic casting tools. But Rei's magic casting tool, which he had seen earlier that day, was also a weapon.....in addition, it also seemed to be an extremely powerful magic weapon.

Of course, it wasn't like magic casting tools with other purposes didn't exist. **だが**、However, to create a magic item with the ability to cast magic and have another special ability required a very high level of skill. Conversely, that was why it was more common for magic casting tools to only have that ability. In other words, to have the special ability to be as a magic casting tool and a weapon, that large scythe was extremely precious.....in fact, it was so valuable that he wondered if even the best alchemists in the Magic City Osus could make one.

(That magic item alone should be worth a substantial amount. Then there is the item box.)

Although he hated Rei, he couldn't just pass up this opportunity. It was too good. Whether it was the various magic items Rei had or the Griffon, they were all the same.

"How is his network of connections?"

"Contacts, is it?"

"Ah. Even if we try to trap him, he looks like someone who will cause a lot of trouble."

The butler wondered what his master wanted to say and spoke after thinking for a few seconds.

"If it's purely personal connections, there's Margrave Rowlocks. Although I'm going back and forth with time, there's also the raid against the Orc village. At that time, Rei seemed to have been the one who defeated the Orc King that was leading the Orcs. Because of that, Margrave Rowlocks seems to have made

his move then. As a result, he took the rank up test as a special case and is now rank D. After that, I can confirm that Rei took up a nominated request."

".....So he's connected with the Margrave. That's troublesome."

"And....."

The butler fumbled for the right words. Bolton turned his eyes towards him to prompt him to continue.

"That is, regarding the nominated request I mentioned just now.....a while ago, I recall that the daughter of Duke Kerebel, a central figure in the Nobles Faction, came to Gimuru."

".....Ah. I heard about that. She seems to be called the General Princess or something."

"Yes, that's her. Apparently, the nominated request was for the escort of Duke Kerebel's daughter."

"What? Then, what. You're saying that brat is also connected to Duke Kerebel?"

"Although I can't say for sure, that is a possibility."

".....Damn it!"

If it was only Daska, the lord of the city of Gimuru, it would still be possible to make arrangements to deal with Rei. Naturally, there was a corresponding risk and it would be dangerous if it was found out, but the returns would be sufficient to cover the expenditure. However, if he had a connection with Duke Kerebel as the butler said, it would all be for nothing. Margrave Daska Rowlocks was a key member of the Neutral Faction. As a key member, he also had a lot of influence. It wasn't a difficult task to crush a frontier territory merchant if he used his power.

"Trapping him, will be dangerous. Then.....hmm. Hey."

"Yes, what is it?"

"Contact all the weapon shops in Gimuru. Get them to refuse to sell weapons to that brat Rei. As for that magic casting tool, since he uses it as a weapon, he should need to take care of it. If so, he will rely on weapon shops. If he is refused by all weapon shops.....then, the message to that brat should be clear."

"That is.....isn't that, directly interfering? Galahat-san had said there wouldn't be a second time."

Galahat. Hearing that name, Bolton frowned his eyes unpleasantly. To Bolton, Galahat was someone who came out of a relationship between his father and a mistress in his father's old age. Just thinking that they were connected by blood was enough to make him feel discomfort in his heart.

"That good for nothing. Even though I don't like it, I have him as a guard because he's related by blood. If he's swept away by a rank D brat, he's not worthy of being rank B."

"Bolton-sama, in the first place, that adventurer Rei defeated a rank B monster, an Orc King, when he was rank G. Even though guild rank is a measure of ability, it's dangerous to apply that to this person called Rei."

At the butler's words, Bolton gave a slight scowl. Even he could understand that the adventurer named Rei was a different person than the others. In any case, in the city of Gimuru, he managed all the weapon shops, and yet Rei had tried to kill him without any hesitation. Although he didn't die in the end, he abhorred the fact that it was due to Galahat's help.

"It's fine. If he tries to do something again, we will judge him under criminal laws then."

"Bolton-sama.....then, I will inform all weapon shops in the city.....but is that really fine?"

"You're being obstinate. Just do as I tell you."

"Certainly."

The butler left with a deep bow.

Seeing that, Bolton had a great feeling as he imagined what would happen to Rei from tomorrow as he drank.

"Guh....."

While Bolton was drinking in dark pleasure, in another room in Bolton's mansion, Galahat woke up with a groan.

"Galahat-san!"

Seeing Galahat wake up, Murt, who was sitting in a chair near the bed, gave a happy cry.

"T-This is.....?"

"This is the infirmary."

When you had as much money and power as Bolton, you never knew when thugs would attack. Aside from that, there were also injuries that could be incurred during private training. Because of that, Bolton had hired a doctor that lived in his mansion. It was in that room that Galahat had woken in.

"The infirmary.....? -!? My brother! Guh-!"

Lifting up his body suddenly, he felt pain from the ribs that had broken from the impact of Rei's attack.

"Galahat-san! It's absolutely necessary that you rest! According to the doctor, if you had been brought in just 20 minutes later, he wouldn't have been able to use recovery magic on you!"

Murt told him with tears in his eyes. Indeed, the ribs that had broken due to Rei's attack had injured his internal organs. Galahat hadn't died because the doctor that Bolton had hired with his money was skilled in healing magic. Rei's single attack had that much power and he had forced himself to move after being injured.

"Murt, ah, what about my brother?"

"Ahh, he's safe. He has no injuries. That Rei also kept his promise and left without doing anything more."

".....I see, my brother is safe."

"Certainly for Rei but....."

Seeing Murt go quiet, Galahat turned to look at the bed beside Murt.

Moving his body slightly, he endured the pain, turned his eyes and saw a girl there. However, because she was sleeping in the infirmary, she was not in a normal state.

"This is....."

Galahat was at a loss for words when he saw the girl. There were several scars on her back and even if healing magic was used, those scars would unlikely go away. Because she was injured on her back, she was sleeping with her chest down.No, she was unconscious.

"She's one of the maids who serves in the mansion. She was hit by Bolton....."
"What!"

Galahat was at a loss when Murt told him. Even he had never thought that his older brother.....would scar a girl for life. It was in a fit of anger as well.

(.....No, that's not right. I can't say it's impossible if it is my older brother.)

"Sorry."

Galahat gave a quiet apology.

"Why is Galahat-san apologising! This is all the consequence of Bolton's actions! Though what he did to this girl is terrible....."

"Still, to vent his anger like that in a tantrum.....wait. A tantrum?"

Galahat felt a sense of discomfort at his own words.

Although Bolton was his older half brother by blood, Galahat knew his character well. Yes, for example, he would never forgive anyone who made a fool out of him. And for the sake of profit, he wouldn't care about what would happen to others. However, his brother also had a cowardly aspect. He had suffered direct damage from today's events, it was obvious. Then why had his brother still thrown a tantrum and almost beat a maid to death?

(I thought my brother would have been scared by the events and won't go after Rei anymore. But what if I'm mistaken?)

Yes. Galahat was certainly a B ranked adventurer and was a person with great strength in the city of Gimuru. However, that was only his capabilities as an adventurer. A connoisseur of magic items. His sense of smell for money was far behind Bolton's. And if Bolton smelled money from Rei.

"Galahat-san?"

".....Murt. Listen carefully to what I'm about to say."

Galahat couldn't move right now. The only thing he could do was to rely on his companion who looked up to him.

Chapter 126

The next day, Rei and Set finished their breakfast at the Dusk Wheat before heading to the guild as usual.

But.....

(What is with the looks?)

As he bought some snacks as usual and was sharing them with Set as they walked, he felt people looking at him from all around.

At first, Rei had thought it may have people looking get back at him for the matter with Bolton yesterday. But because he couldn't feel any hostility or blood thirst from the look, he dismissed the thought.

Although he turned to see who was looking at him, most of them were unsuited for fighting. Some of them had trained their bodies, but few looked used to fighting.

(There's no doubt the the matter of yesterday is related.....)

While thinking about that, even though he wanted to find out the reason behind the looks, there was nothing he could do for now, so he headed for the guild as he ate.

"Ah, Rei-san. It's good to see you. Even though you usually come everyday, you didn't show up yesterday. I wondered if something had happened regarding the matter two days ago."

Lenora breathed a sigh of relief when she saw Rei enter the guild.

After the event at Bolton's house yesterday, he didn't fell like going to the guild and went back to the inn.....as Lenora didn't know, she seemed worried about it.

Next to her, Kenny had a sulky expression.

"That issue has been taken care of for now.....why is Kenny pouting like that?"

Since he had still left the source of the issue alive, he decided that it would be best not to talk about the events of yesterday.

Though he had intended to talk about the matter of people looking at him before he came to the guild, Lenora and Kenny were only guild receptionists. They might hear about it through gossip in the near future but he judged that it would be better if he didn't get them caught up in the fuss.

"Don't worry about it. It's just that she was away on break and couldn't help you with the matter."

Understanding why she was sulking, Rei spoke up with a wry smile.

"I can't say I wouldn't have liked Kenny's help. The timing just didn't match. Nothing really happened anyway.....either way, it's been taken care of for now."

"There was a dispute after all."

Lenora muttered with an exasperated expression.

"Well, something like that. Something like telling me to unconditionally hand over my magic items and Set and just expecting me to say yes."

Lenora's face twitched at Rei's words.

Lenora had completely forgotten to report the guild master that Rei was involved in some sort of trouble. She hadn't thought that there would any trouble as he had only just been called by Bolton, the president of Azoth Firm. But with what Rei had just said, there was clearly a problem.

(Even so, it seems that Rei has solved the issue by himself.)

Lenora thought to herself.

As she had seen the unconventional ways Rei dealt with things, she didn't think Rei had run into any real trouble.

And because of that, she had forgotten to report that Rei had encountered problems.

This was because she had the perception that if she just left things as they were, any problems would solve themselves.

As Lenora was thinking.

"Ah, it's Rei. It's been a few days. It's good to meet you here."

A voice called out to Rei, who was at the counter.

When Rei turned around, he saw Freon, the female warrior in her thirties. Next to her was the figure of Brazos the Dwarf, carrying a huge hammer.

".....You two."

Although Rei looked at the two of them with reproachful eyes, the two of them tilted their heads as if they didn't know why Rei was looking at them like that.

"What happened, having such a grimace? Did we do something?"

"I guess. I told you that I couldn't drink that much and yet you got me helplessly drunk."

"Ah, ahahahaha. I didn't think you would go down that quickly."

Freon gave an embarrassed laugh as Bazos the Dwarf shook his head as if Rei was pathetic.

"To get helplessly drunk on liquor, you can't be a true warrior like that."

"No, I'm not a true warrior. I'm a magic warrior.Or rather, in the first place, being a true warrior and drinking liquor have nothing to do with each other."

"What are you saying! Warriors have exchange toasts of victory after each fight to deepen their bonds."

"Sorry, I can't really do that. That's why I'm working solo."

When he said that, as if expecting it, Freon took a step forward.

"Yes, yes. That is the case, but could you work together with us on this request?"

Freon said that as she glanced at the B rank request board for a moment.

"A request?"

"Ah. It's your favourite, a subjugation request."

"I don't mind.....but why me? Weren't you always working with just the two of you in Crushing Warriors?"

"Ahh, that is true. But the subjugation target is a bit of a problem. Anyway,

come to take a look."

Freon pulled Rei over to the request board.

At her assertiveness, Kenny looked at Freon with a sharp look.....fortunately, she decided that Freon wasn't a rival due to the age difference, so there wasn't an incident of any sort.

"Here, this request. It's been stuck here for a long time and it looks like there will be an effect on us if something isn't done soon."

Despite having some doubt at Freon's words, Rei looked through the request form.

There was definitely a subjugation request form attached there. The subjugation target was Harpies. The location was some distance from Gimuru, a mountain just before the location of the Orc village that Rei previously raided. Harpies inhabited a mountain 10 hours away from the city of Gimuru. Travelers, merchants and sometimes adventurers would be attacked by them. But.....

"A rank B Harpy subjugation request? If I remember correctly, Harpies are rank D monsters."

Yes, as Rei said, the threat level of Harpies wasn't that great. Of course, they were more powerful than other D rank monsters like Goblins, but it was still unusual for them to be in a rank B request.

To put it another way, the Emerald Wolves Rei had fought in the dungeon were considered B rank if they were in a pack. Or something at the same level as the Orc King he had fought in the Orc village.

However, Brazos quickly answered Rei's question.

"The location is a problem. As you said, Harpies themselves are weak, it's not a strong monster. However, they live near the top of a mountain. That is the reason why."

"Also, the flock is also an issue. No one has been able to confirm their numbers yet, but there is around 20-30 of them."

".....Ah, I understand."

Rei nodded at Brazos' words.

Certainly, to kill Harpies, you could either patiently wait for them to attack you or go up to the nest where they lived. In the former case, it was entirely up to luck whether they attacked or not and even then, the probability wasn't that great. In the case of Harpies, they would rather attack travelers who knew nothing about them than adventurers lying in wait. If they went up to the summit to the Harpies nest, they were likely to run into other monsters before they reached it. In addition, Harpies were monsters that group together.....if it went badly, you might end up having to fight a dozen Harpies at the same time. Given those circumstances, although Harpies were D rank monsters by themselves, it wasn't strange that they would be in a request two ranks higher.

"So, why will there be an issue if they aren't subjugated? Is it the Harpy raids I've heard about?"

Brazos shook his head at Rei's question.

"That is one thing. However, there is a more compelling reason."

"Why are you so sure?"

"Mm. Rei, as an adventurer you have to maintain, repair or replace your weapons, you understand the importance right?"

Rei nodded his head naturally at Brazos' words.

As Rei's main weapon was the Death Scythe, he didn't need to bother with maintaining it because of its properties. However, his other tools.....especially the knife he used to strip monster materials, needed more care. If he neglected to maintain them, the blood, fat, body fluids and magical energy it came in contact with would soon make it useless.

At Rei's explanation, Brazos gave a nod.

"That's right, as long as adventurer take dangerous requests, maintenance, repair and replacement of weapons is essential.So, of course, you need metal for that."

Listening to Brazos words, Rei understood what he wanted to say. Harpies nest, mountain, metal. In other words.

"The mountain where they want to mine ore is where the Harpies nest is?"

Freon nodded her head in assent.

"That's is correct. Although it's not a rare magic metal ore, it's still metal ore. It's mainly an iron ore deposit. If we're lucky, there may also be magic crystals and flame ore.....that's how I feel."

Magic crystals were a common medium used in magic casting tools. Although it wasn't much, they had the property of improving magic power slightly. Flame ore was literally stones that contained fire magic energy and was well known as a material used in alchemy. In high purity, it could create a fiery explosion when shattered.

"What if it's not possible to get the iron ore to a merchant?"

"If I say it can be done, it can be done. However, the cost of transportation will naturally be added to the cost of the iron ore."

"If that became the case, there is a possibility that lower ranked adventurers won't be able to afford weapons."

Hearing their explanations, Rei understood.

"But, in such circumstances, won't other adventurers take the request? Why is there only a few days remaining?"

"That's simple. In the mountains, you don't know when Harpies would attack you. In addition, Harpies are low ranked monsters, so the compensation isn't that high. In other words, the reward is too low for the high level of risk."

".....That's tough. So, then why do you two want to take the request?"

The risk was great and the reward was low. If Brazos' words were true, then there wasn't really a need to ask Rei to join them in such a dangerous request.

"What, aside from chivalrous spirit.....there's not really any other reason. However, I was asked by a blacksmith I know. I can't reject his request since I've been in his care for various things. In addition....."

Brazos said that with a grinning smile. Next to him, Freon spoke up with a smile as well.

"Speaking of which, the most annoying thing about fighting Harpies aside from their group attacks is simply that they can fly in the sky. Fortunately, we have an adventurer who is followed by a Griffon. In other words, someone who can deal with enemies in the sky.....do you understand so far?"

Her meaning was clear. In other words, since Set could fly, he was an effective fighting force against the Harpies.

"How about it? If we form a temporary party, we can help the people in the city."

Rei thought about Brazos' words for a few seconds.

In the first place, Rei's goal was to was to collect magic stones from monsters and he hadn't obtained a Harpy's magic stone yet. There was also the possibility of being attacked by monsters that he had never seen before as they went up the mountain.

"I see. If you can promise to give me two magic stones of each type of monster we defeat, I can work with you.....what do you say?"

"Hm, magic stones.Freon. what do you think? I don't have any issues."

"Ahh, well....."

At Brazos' words, Freon brushed her hair as if troubled.....before nodding as there was no helping it.

"Well, there's no helping it. However, the magic stones you take will be subtracted from your share of the reward.....are you okay with that?"

"Ahh, that's fine."

Anyhow, after acting as Elena's escort, he wasn't in any financial trouble.

(No, wait? Because I gave a request to strip materials, I could also request the purchase of magic stones as well.....no, in the first place, the purchase of magic stones is an important thing to the guild. If I didn't do it carefully, the guild might start keeping an eye on me. If I was an alchemist, this would be easier.)

Magic stones were the most expensive part of a monster. Naturally, there was good reason that their purchasing price was much higher than other materials. They were used as materials in alchemy to produce magic items and, if an alchemist processed them, as a batteries to power magic items. It wouldn't be that big of a deal if an alchemist who was also an adventurer wanted to buy some. But it would stand out a lot more since he also had an item box and a Griffon.

"Rei?"

"No, nothing at all. The conditions are fine with me, when do we leave?"

"It's better to get rid of the Harpies as soon as we can. The sooner the better.
.....If possible, right away."

"I understand. Then let's prepare right away."

In this way, Rei formed a temporary party with Freon the female warrior and Brazos the Dwarf.

Chapter 127

Rei, Freon and Brazos decided to take a subjugation request for Harpies, which had a nest at the summit of a mountain relatively close to the city of Gimuru and had been attacking travelers, merchants and adventurers.

"Ah, the three of you. Have you decided what request to take?"

Freon nodded at Lenora's words.

"Ahh, I've decided to take up this request with the three of us."

When Freon handed of the the sheet she had taken from the rank B request board, Lenora raised her eyebrows slightly.

"A rank B request, is it? So Rei-san is temporarily joining Crushing Warriors?"

"Ah. I can't accept a rank B request otherwise."

"You have no problems with that, Rei-san?"

Lenora glanced at Rei. Since Rei had mostly acted solo, she was concerned that he would be able to fit in to a party, even if it was only temporarily.

Nearby, Kenny looked at Lenora enviously. But, if anything, Lenora consider Rei to be someone like a younger brother.

"I have no problems. Although it is unusual for me to temporarily join other parties, this isn't the first time either."

As Rei said that, he thought about the time they raided the Orc village, the rank up test and the time he followed Elena into the dungeon.

However, Lenora disagreed.

"Just now, I'm sure you were thinking about the Orc village raid, but that was special. With the number of people in that raid, you can't really say you were working with another party."

".....Didn't I escort someone for a nominated request?"

"Was it a party of adventurers?"

"....."

When this was pointed out by Lenora, Rei gently looked away. Still, he stubbornly kept going.

"I formed a party with other people for the rank up test."

"I know about the rank up test, but that was mostly a temporary party formed by adventurers who had been working solo."

"Ahh, Miss Lenora. Don't bother him too much. It will be fine, him and us are drinking buddies. We'll get along together."

TLN: I used Miss here because the Japanese term would have been really awkward to phrase.

Looking at the face of Brazos, who interjected with a wry smile, Lenora gave a sigh.

"I understand, I'll believe it if Brazos-san says so. Then, the Harpy subjugation request has been accepted by Crushing Warriors."

Saying that, Lenora filled in the necessary information into a document. Finishing that, she turned to Rei, as if suddenly remembering something.

"Ah, that's right. Regarding the request for stripping materials. It was accepted as rank D. What will you do regarding the fees and rewards? Do you want to pay it now?"

"Ah. How much is it?"

"Since it's rank D, the commission is 1 silver coin."

At Lenora's words, he took out a bag of coins from his pocket and gave her a silver coin.

"Yes, that's right. Then, do you mind if the conditions of the request are kept the same as before and interviewing the people who take "

"Please do. However, as you know, I'm going on a Harpy subjugation request now, it would be a big help if the interviews could be scheduled for after I get back."

"I understand. I will add a note for that. Crushing Warriors, Rei-san, we will wait for your safe return."

Lenora sent the three of them off with a bow as they left the guild.

"Rei-kun, please be careful!"

Kenny's voice could be heard through the guild as they went out.

"Hahaha~. You're very popular, hey."

Freon smiled and slapped Rei on the back with a ban~ ban~ sound once they were outside the guild.

"No, I don't think that's the case. If anything, my partner is the one treated like that."

"Still, an adventurer that Kenny likes, it's enviable. Proof of that was when she was looking at Lenora jealously."

After gently shrugging off Freon, Rei looked around.

"So what will we do? Do you want to rent a wagon?"

"Huh? I don't think so. It's not a distance that will take many days to get to. We'll walk, we'll walk."

"That's right. Because the rewards for this request are small in the first place, it's best that we avoid unneeded expenditure."

Freon shook her head at Rei's question and Brazos agreed with her.

"No, I thought it would be better to finish this request as soon as possible to take another request. That way, wouldn't the compensation increase?"

"Well, there's that way of thinking. But this time, since you're part of Crushing Warriors temporarily, do you mind following our style?"

".....I don't have any money problems right now so that's fine."

They kept talking as they walked towards the guild's carriage and horse waiting area. There were a lot of children gathered around Set as usual.

There were also some adults, who had brought some dried meat for the purpose of feeding to Set.

While Freon and Brazos were surprised by the crowd, Rei walked towards the children, familiar with the situation.

"Sorry, I have to leave for a request today. Since I'll be heading out of the city, Set won't be here tomorrow. Don't feel disappointed if you come to the guild."

"Ehhh~, Set won't be here tomorrow?"

"Hey, hey. It can't be helped. Rei is an adventurer and Set is his companion."

At the complaints of a 10 year old boy, a middle aged man, probably his father, calmed him down.

As Rei watched the situation, as people gathered round to feed Set. He stroked Set before speaking to him.

"Hey, Set. We will be going out on a request."

"Guru~"

Giving a small nod in understanding, Set got up from his lying down position.

Rei suddenly noticed something as he watched Set.

"Set, have you gotten bigger?"

"Guru~?"

Set tilted his head at Rei's words. He seemed to be larger than when he was first created by the Magic Beast Art, although only bit a small amount.

(Well, since it's been a while since he was born, it wouldn't be strange for him to become bigger.....I guess?)

While thinking like that, he joined back up with Freon and Brazos, who had surprised expressions as Rei stroked Set's back.

"Gurururu~?"

Who are these two? Set seemed to ask as he tilted his head.

"We will be taking this request with these two people. It's a Harpy subjugation request at a nearby mountain."

Finally pulling herself together at those words, Freon gently reached for Set.

"Umm, I'm Freon. I'll be relying on your help to deal with the Harpies. I'll be in your care.Rei, will it bite? It's beak looks very sharp."

"There's no problem unless you try to doing something to him."

"I-Is that so.....? Seeing how sharp it looks, I don't want to think about how hard it would be to escape if I got caught."

"Did you see the scene before? He's very popular with the children in Gimuru. You don't have to worry about your actions too much."

".....I-I know."

While saying that, Freon's hand gently stroked Set.....

"Uoh~, what's with this fur coat. It's amazingly smooth!?"

She gave a voice of surprise at the silk like smoothness.

"Hou~, hou~, it certainly looks smart when you see it's eyes."

Next to Freon, who was surprised, Brazos reached out to stroke Set's head without hesitation.

"Hey, Brazos. You look calm. Look at its beak and claws."

"Hahaha~. Although they may look dangerous, his eyes look intelligent. As expected of an A rank monster."

"Guru~"

Of course, Set seemed to say as he gave a small nod.

"Mm? This Griffon. Did say his name was Set? Could he possibly understand what we're saying?"

"Ah. Set can understand what we say reasonably well."

"I see. As expected of an A rank monster."

Nodding in admiration, Brazos decided that that was enough for introductions with Rei and Set and turned to Freon before speaking.

"Now then, let's meet up and the main city gate after we finish our preparations. The plan is the attack the Harpies while they're sleeping, are there any objections?"

Freon silently shrugged her shoulders and Rei shook his head.

"There are no objections. Anyway, there will be fewer Harpies out hunting as they will have all gathered together to sleep.By the way, do Harpies have good night vision?"

"I don't know. If their head was a birds, it might be the case, but Harpies have the body and head of a woman while their arms and legs are a bird's you know?"

".....I see. I was just thinking that a night attack would be great if they don't have night vision."

"Speaking of that, what about Set? Even if he's a Griffon, doesn't he have the

head of an Eagle?"

"No, Set has good night vision. I don't know if it's due to his magic power or if it's because he's an A rank monster."

"Gururu~"

Set gave a happy cry. But to Freon, who wasn't familiar with Set yet, his cry seemed as if he was displeased and she took a step back.

Brazos looked at her with an amazed look but decided that they wouldn't get anywhere if they stayed like this. He clapped his hands to gather everyone's attention.

"Listen up, we'll gather at the main city gate in about an hour's time. After that, we'll head for the Harpies' mountain and conduct a night attack tonight. After that, we will stay for the night and return tomorrow morning. Hey, hurry up. You'll be a burden if you arrive late."

Saying that, Brazos quickly started moving away from the guild. Freon gave a sigh before scratching her head and chasing after him.

"Rei, you should prepare properly. If you arrive late, you'll become a burden to the rest of us."

Briefly saying that before leaving.

(No, well. Since I have the Misty Ring, I don't have an issue with carrying anything.....)

As of now, most of his belongings were kept inside the Misty Ring, which was on his right arm. He didn't really need to prepare anything before heading for the mountain.

"Ah, no. That's right. Harpies can fly in the sky, I should prepare other counter measures aside from Set."

At that moment, he thought of the spear he had thrown in the dungeon and how effective it had been. With the weight of the spear and Rei's strength, the spear exerted a power close to that of a siege weapon. What he needed weren't expensive spears. Since they were disposable, it didn't matter if they were crude spears that costed next to nothing. No, if you considered the cost effectiveness, cheaper spears would be better. Ultimately, he could also use a

random stone from nearby. However, spears had a higher attack power than stones as they had a spearhead, which was why he wanted to use them.

"Well, I have some time so maybe I should take a look for some spears at the weapon shops."

Muttering to himself, he went with Set to a weapons shop not far from the guild.

(Speaking of that, the child I helped a while ago said that his father was a blacksmith.....well, I don't have much time today so maybe I will visit him after the Harpy subjugation is completed.)

Thinking to himself, he entered a weapons shop about 10 minutes walk from the guild.Of course, Set had to wait outside because of his size. It seemed that he was already familiar with these situations and lay down at a spot to not disturb the street as he waited for Rei.

"Welcom-....."

The shop owner paused abruptly as he was about to call out to Rei, who had just entered the shop. Giving a confused look at the shop owner, Rei headed towards the place where all the spears were lined up.

There were lots of spears including practice spears, ceremonial spears, decorative spears and plain spear with no ornaments, which were used by soldiers.

With that said, what Rei was looking for were spears used by soldiers. To be exact, because he was planning to use them as disposables, he didn't care about the expensive spears.

Picking up a spear that was made for soldiers, he held it in his hand to check its weight distribution.

It wasn't a stance that was often used by warriors who used a spear. Instead, it was closer to that of an athlete in a javelin competition.

"Hm, I see. That's what I was looking for."

After that, he went towards the counter with a satisfied expression after selecting 5 spears that would have been used by soldiers. But.....

"Sorry customer-san. Actually, all those spears over there have already been purchased and are awaiting delivery. I can't sell them."

The shop owner bowed his head apologetically.

"What? Then why do you have them in the shop front?"

"That is.....since there's a lot, I don't have anywhere else to put them. I would actually want to put them into the warehouse, but I was told to have them ready to be picked up at any time."

The shop owner kept talking without giving Rei a chance to speak.

"Because of that, I was thinking about closing the shop now because I will be busy with that for a while. I'm sorry but....."

The shop owner, who seemed to be in his thirties, bowed his head many times as he apologised.

Thinking about the situation in his mind, Rei was aware that he would be lucky if he could replenish his spears and left the weapons shop and headed for the main gate without saying anything in particular.

Chapter 128

"The owner of that weapons shop felt a bit strange.....it can't be."

Rei walked towards the main gate with Set as he muttered to himself.

"Guru~?"

What's wrong? Set asked as he tilted his head while walking next to Rei. Rei stroked Set's head to tell him it was nothing.

Of course, Rei had skewers, sandwiches and all sorts of snacks in his hands as usual.

While Rei walked along as he ate, he was drawn by a smell drifting from a nearby store and he turned to take a look.

".....That's right, it will be autumn soon, I should buy some stew. Set, wait here for me."

"Gururu~"

Hearing Rei, Set gave a cry of consent as Rei entered the store.

Fortunately, since the 9am bell had already rang, breakfast peak time had already passed and there were a lot fewer customers.

Still, in preparation for lunch, there was a good smell in the dining room that stimulated the appetite.

"Welcome. What would you like?"

When Rei entered the store, he was greeted by a girl in her mid teens, about the same age as Rei. The way she spoke familiarly with Rei and her appearance showed that her job was probably to attract customers.

Rei shook his head at her.

"No, I haven't come to eat here."

"Huh? Then why have you come to our store?"

"Actually, I could smell good stewed food from this place. I would like to buy

some to take away.If possible, an entire pot of stew."

".....Yes?"

Hearing Rei's order, the girl looked back at Rei in surprise.

Seeing that, Rei took out seven silver coins from the cloth bag in his pocket and placed them on the table.

"Including the price of the pot, is this enough?"

"Eh? Eh? Eh? Silver coins.....seven!?"

In the city of Gimuru where prices were cheap, the girl was surprised and confused at the amount of money, which an ordinary person wouldn't think of paying for a meal. However, she immediately pulled herself together.....

"Wai-Wait a moment! I'll call my father right away!"

The girl said that in a fluster and hurried to the kitchen in the back. In less than a minute, she came back with a middle-aged man in his forties.

"Seriously, what is it. I'm still not completely finished cooking."

"Father, don't worry about that. We have a special customer!"

As she had a delicate build, the scene of her frantically pulling a much larger middle-aged man was quite funny.

"Ah, customer-san. Sorry for making you wait. This is our cook."

"What is it, this.So, are you a customer? Do you have any business with me?"

"Ah. I smelled something nice from outside the store. I would like to buy that food I smelled if it's possible. Regarding the price....."

He glanced towards the girl for a moment.

"He will pay 7 silver coins!"

"Haa!? Seven silver coins.....no, it's great to have my dish evaluated as such. However, that's too much for a pot. Our pot is big enough to cook for 50 people. You won't be able to finish it before it goes off. I can't agree to sell my food knowing that it will go off."

The man was surprised at the seven silver coins but refused to sell his food if it meant that it would just be thrown away. Seeing the character of the chef, Rei

gave a friendly smile.

"There's no problems there. I have an item box."

Saying that, he showed them the Misty Ring that was on his right arm.

"An item box.....ah! That's right, You're the adventurer who's rumored to have a Griffon following him!"

The girl shouted in surprise as she looked at Rei. At her voice, the few customers that were in the store also turned to look at Rei strangely.

"Ah? Rumors? what about them."

"What, don't you know father?By the way, my father is someone who doesn't have any interest in listening to rumors. But still, have you not heard anything? An unexpected rookie followed by a Griffon had appeared and was buying up a lot of food from the street stalls."

(Those rumors.)

It was a different rumor than the ones he had been thinking of.

However, after Rei came to the city of Gimuru, it wasn't uncommon for the sales of street stalls to rise by several times. Admittedly, Set was a Griffon 2m in length and Rei's body required a high energy intake. The meals served at the Dusk Wheat where he stayed weren't enough and so they supplemented their diet with things like skewers and sandwiches, that could easily be purchased at stalls.

If he put them into the Misty Ring, they would also not rot. Because of that effect from the magic item, it also saved him time to buy more in case of emergency situations.

"I don't know about that, but are you saying I should sell my food to this boy knowing that it will go off and be thrown away?"

Rei nodded at the man's words.

"Ah. If you will sell it to me, I'll eat it all gratefully."

".....Well.....fine. If you don't let it spoil and eat it all up properly. You also told me that my cooking was worth seven silver coins from the smell alone. I usually turn away customers at this time.Alright! I understand. Fortunately, there's

enough time before noon to prepare some more and I have a spare pot. I'll sell it to you boy. Come."

He made a prompt decision. Saying that in a loud voice, the man took Rei to the kitchen at once.

In the kitchen was a big pot.No, based on its size it should be called a huge pot rather than a big pot. A large amount of meat and vegetables were boiling in the pot. Rather than a soup, it was closer to a stew.

"As you can see, this is how big it is. It's not that heavy when it's empty but there's plenty inside right now. Even I can't lift it. Will you have any problems putting it into an item box?"

"Ah. There's no problems."

Murmuring, he touched the handle of the pot and said『Store』in his mind. The next moment, the huge pot had already disappeared.

"Uwa~. That's amazing. It's the first time I've seen an item box being used."

"Basically, it's a rare magic item. By the way, can I eat it as it is now? Or would it be better to cook it for longer before eating?"

"That's right. Since the flavour has already soaked in for long enough, there's no problem with eating it right away. But if you ask my opinion as a chef, boiling it for another hour before eating it will be best.Ah, take this as well.

Otherwise, seven silver coins would be too much."

Saying that, he handed over a basket filled with bread. Everything was freshly baked and was unusually soft and fluffy for bread in the city of Gimuru.

"I won't say no to that."

Just like the pot, he stored it into the Misty Ring and continued to converse with them for a few more minutes before leaving the store.

"Gurururu~"

As soon as he left the store, Set gave a cry and walked over. The smell of the stew seemed to have stuck to Rei's body and stimulated Set's appetite.

With a wry smile at the situation, Rei took out one of the freshly baked bread and gave it to Set.

"Gururururu~"

They headed for the main gate with Set nodding in satisfaction as he stuffed his mouth with the soft bread.

As usual, he passed his guild card to Ranga at the main gate. Rei handed over the Necklace of Subservient Monster and walked out the front gate with Set.

Ahead, he saw the figures of Freon and Brazos, with weapons at their waists and rucksacks on their backs, holding their food and equipment for camping.

"You, you're late!"

Seeing Rei and Set, Freon called out to them. Next to her, Brazos looked at Freon in amazement.

"Come one, there's still some time before we agreed to meet up."

"But he still made us wait. It's unbecoming of a man to keep a woman waiting."

".....Freon, we're not meeting here for a date you know? In the first place, you shouldn't expect that of someone who isn't a noble or a knight."

Hearing the banter between the two of them, Rei spoke up with a smile.

"That was quick. Is that all you're bringing along?"

"Mm. In the end, we're only staying one night. More baggage will only get in the way."

"I see. Then, pass me your baggage. I did arrive before the time we agreed on, but I was still later than you two. I'll take of the baggage."

"Mm? You don't have to worry about that though? We always take this much with us."

According to his words, it didn't matter at all. Brazos shook his rucksack with a calm expression. Next to him, Freon spoke up with an amazed look.

"In the first place, who was it that wanted to bring along a barrel of liquor? I'm not saying you shouldn't drink, but at least hold off for this request."

"What are you saying? For Dwarves, it's the water of life! Even if there is no food, alcohol is absolutely necessary."

"Seriously, this is why this Dwarf....."

Giving up halfway, Freon put her hand against her face.

"Ah, here. Don't worry about it. Even if it's not heavy, it will still interfere with Brazos' movements."

Saying that, Rei wrested the rucksack from Brazos.

"H-Hey."

"Wait a moment. If Brazos carries it, it will definitely slow him down, but isn't it the same for you? No, your movements would be restricted even more than Brazos....."

The reason Freon didn't finish her words was because Rei had quickly stored the rucksack into the Misty Ring. The two of them opened their eyes in surprise as Rei gave a sigh.

"What. Haven't you heard the rumors that I have an item box?"

Rei asked them in amazement but Freon and Brazos shook their heads silently.

"I only heard the rumors that you were followed by a Griffon."

"Same. This is the first time I've heard that you have an item box."

At their replies, Rei was puzzled.

Rei didn't know himself, but compared to the item box, Set was a lot more noticeable. Naturally, the rumors that spread said that Rei was an outstanding rookie followed by a Griffon.

There were also rumors that said he had an item box, but these rumors were mainly spread among adventurers and were hardly known by the general public. Because of that, as Crushing Warriors had only heard rumors from the streets, they hadn't heard about his item box.

".....Well, that's good. Should we start a bit sooner then? We can't do anything to the Harpies by just standing forever in front of the main gate."

"Ah, Ahh. That's right. No, my bad. I was just surprised to suddenly see a legendary magic item."

"True.So, Rei. Could you show us your item box for future reference?"

Nodding at Brazos' words, Rei paused for a moment.

"I don't mind, but this item box has been set so that only I can use it. I can still

show you it though."

"What? Does that mean that the item box has registered Rei's magic power?"

"Ah."

When Rei nodded, a curious light appeared in Brazos' eyes.

"Did the Margrave do that?"

"No, it was my master that gave me this item box."

When he had received the Misty Ring after entering Zepairu's hall, Rei had found out that it was the work of Zepairu's alchemist, Esta Nord. However, as he couldn't tell them that, Rei said that it was his master's work.

"I've heard the rumors, but your master must considerably skilled. I haven't seen anyone like that in these times.I wish I was that skilled."

Brazos looked at the Misty Ring around Rei's right wrist with a bit of envy.

Seeing that, Rei remembered the story Freon had told him in the guild. Brazos had wanted to be a blacksmith but lacked the aptitude for it.

(Even if he lacked the aptitude to be a blacksmith, he still wants to become one.)

Glancing at Freon, it looked like she had remembered the same thing. Giving a small nod, Freon mouthed the word "please".

".....It can't be helped. Let's get to the mountain in time to make a night attack."

"Mm, thank you. Let's go at once!"

At Rei's words, Brazos proceed to head down the highway with gusto. Rei and Freon looked at each other wryly before following after him.

Chapter 129

"Well, this is easy isn't it. When we usually enter a mountain, we would be definitely be attacked by small fry monsters."

Freon's satisfied voice echoed through the mountains.

Several hours had passed since they had entered the mountain where the Harpies lived. During that time, they had been attacked by monsters twice, but compared to when they usually entered a mountain, the frequency of attacks was quite low.

Of course, there was a reason for that. Many monsters had approached, wanting to feed on the Humans and Dwarf. But when they came near, most of them noticed Set, the A rank monster, Griffon. Instinctively, they understood the difference in status and ran away.

While there were some wild animals which weren't monsters that attacked them, like Fang Boars, who bared their tusks before rushing at them..... naturally, Set wouldn't let them pass and would literally slash their necks with his claws. The meat was kept by Rei for lunch.

"That's right. It's so easy that it makes me feel we're on a sightseeing trip."

As he said that, Brazos looked at the surrounding landscape. Although he carried a huge hammer on his back, after entering the mountain.....no, since leaving the city of Gimuru, he had yet to swing it once.

"Wow. It's definitely autumn. Look at those wonderful autumn leaves."

Before his eyes, many trees had autumn leaves, coloured yellow and red. It was a clear autumn sky with few clouds and there was a clean air, particular to mountains. The broad leaf trees that grew everywhere on the mountain covered it in a wonderful shade of yellow and red.

"Hey, Brazos. The scenery is splendid, but don't forget to keep your guard up."

Although Freon warned Brazos, who was admiring the autumn mountainside, it was true that even she was fascinated by the beautiful autumn mountains.

"Gururu~"

Seeing Set raise a cry, Rei turned to look towards the mountain. He saw several shadows flying in the sky.

At such a distance, it would normally be difficult to identify them. However, it wasn't that hard for Rei's enhanced senses.

"Both of you, the sightseeing trip is over. It seems the monsters we came here for have appeared."

"What!?"

Yes. The shadows that were flying near the summit of the mountain far away had the face and body of a woman but the arms and legs of a bird of prey. In other words, they were the Harpies that were the target of their subjugation request.

"Are they coming to us?"

Rei shook his head slightly at Freon's words.

"No. They seem to be flying in a different direction, they haven't noticed us. I guess they're looking for food or something."

"Food.....tch, I have a bad feeling."

Just a few minutes ago, Freon had been fascinated by the autumn mountain, but when she heard that the Harpies were looking for food, she spat on the ground.

In the first place, they had taken on the Harpy subjugation request partially because of the mine but also because travelers, merchants and adventurers had been attacked by Harpies numerous times as they traveled towards the city of Gimuru. They had flown out for food. In other words, they understood that the flock of Harpies that had just flown out of the mountain summit were probably going to attack people for food.

".....We certainly aren't on a sightseeing trip."

Changing his mood, Brazos held his huge hammer in his hands. The gentle

expression on his face several minutes ago had disappeared, leaving behind the look of an adventurer confronting danger.

"That's right. Seriously, I'll teach those damn birds the meaning of despair."

Likewise, Freon murmured with a grim expression.

"Well then, first things first.....what do we do? We had planned to make a night attack on the Harpies nest at the summit, should we rest to keep up our physical condition?"

"We also have another objective. The blacksmith who asked us to help out this time told me that there is a miners' resting hut near the mine. Even though it's just a place for miners to gather and take a break, it's quite spacious inside. Set should be able to rest inside there as well."

"Ahh, I think I've heard of places like that before."

At Brazos' words, it reminded him.....and Freon. In that state, Brazos started walking forward while sighing.

Freon went next, followed by Rei and Set. Rei also took the Death Scythe out of the Misty Ring.

".....Woah, is that the rumored large scythe? It really is huge."

When Freon saw Rei casually take out the Death Scythe, her eyes went wide and she was overwhelmed when she saw the long handle and blade that was taller than Rei.

"It's definitely an amazing blade. It must have be a magic item co-produced by a renowned alchemist and blacksmith."

Brazos had wanted to be a blacksmith in the past, so even through Brazos was at the front, he kept his guard up as he turned around to look with sparkling eyes.

While traveling down the road that had been used by the miners in the past, Rei looked at the two people in front with a wry smile.

"There's no doubt, it's definitely a powerful magic item. But there are disadvantages, like being difficult to move around a narrow place."

"Ahh, I see. Certainly, in this mountain, it's hard to walk with it with all the trees

in the way."

Brazos nodded at Rei's words and turned to look at his huge hammer.

"That said, your Earthshaker Hammer is also similar."

".....That's right, I've told you to switch to an axe or something that is easier to move around. Why do you care about that huge thing so much?"

"You're noisy. Originally, this Earthshaker Hammer was a gift from my parents before I left. Even if it broke, I can still sell it. Adding onto that, Freon, the Earthshaker Hammer is also a magic item that increases its durability."

".....The Earthshaker Hammer?"

At that dangerous name, Rei turned to look at Brazos' hammer.

"Mm. This hammer has an inscription. It's a kind of magic item. It can deal an attack with three times its normal force using magic.However, it has the disadvantage that it takes three days to recharge once that has been used."

It was something he was proud of. Brazos explained while happily stroking the handle of his Earthshaker Hammer.

Seeing that, Freon spoke up while looking at Brazos in amazement.

"Although you boast about your Earthshaker Hammer, Brazos, isn't it still difficult to walk around with it in the mountains? Why don't you have any other weapons you can use?"

".....A while before, I still had an axe you could have used."

In Rei's mind, he thought of a knight who respected her leader greatly. However, when he thought of her using the Power Axe, she looked more like a warrior than a knight.

"Tch, that's a shame.So, we can see it now. There it is."

Ahead of Freon was a kind of log cabin made from trees in the mountain. As they could see, it was quite big.

"Even though people rarely came after the Harpies built a nest here, it's not that run down."

Seeing the cabin, Rei muttered.

It's walls hadn't been destroyed or damaged by monsters. It was a rest area

that they could stay in at any time.

"No one really came to the mine right after the Harpies built their nest on this mountain. But I guess it hasn't been that long since the miners stopped coming. However, the price of ores have still been going up in recent days."

Hearing Freon's words, Rei looked at the door to the cabin. It didn't look like the door had been damaged in any way.

"Still, why hasn't this resting area been destroyed? Usually, aren't buildings built outside the city destroyed by monsters at night?"

"Ahh, the miners didn't really understand either, apparently it had something to do with the ore in the mine.....or so I was told."

"The ore in the mine?"

Rei turned to look towards the entrance of the mine further away, but he didn't feel anything strange. In the first place though, Rei's ability to sense magic power was very low. It was highly possible that he wouldn't feel anything from it even if there was something strange.

"Gurururu~"

However, there was someone else who felt it. Usually, Set wouldn't leave Rei's side, but for some reason, he now stood a few steps away, slowly backing away.

".....I see. Because Set is also a monster, it seems he can't get too close to here either."

Brazos muttered as if he had forgotten.

"Ah.....then, what will you do? Should we rest inside and have Set wait here?"

".....No, both of you can feel free to go to the cabin. Set and I will take a break further out where he is not affected. We'll come back at night."

For Rei, he had no choice, he couldn't leave Set by himself. So he naturally told the two of them that he would be staying a bit further away with Set. But.....

"Hey, wait."

He heard a voice from behind and when he turned around, he saw Freon and Brazos walking towards him from the cabin.

"Is there anything else?"

"Ahh, have you forgotten?."

Thinking for a moment, he remembered the things he had kept.....

"Ahh, my bad. Come to think of it, I still have your rucksacks."

But as he was about to take the rucksacks that had stored in the Misty Ring at Gimuru, Freon gave a frustrated sigh. At the same time, Brazos gave a wry smile.

"It's something else. I'm telling you to not forget about us."

"Not at all. As Freon said, I won't forget about my party members."

As he said that, the two of them stood next to Rei and Set, who had been resting some distance away.

Seeing the two of them like that, Rei spoke up in a hurry.

"Hey, it's only because of Set that I'm not resting in the cabin, it's not for my own sake. You don't need to keep us company....."

"What stupid things are you saying. If you leave here, then why did we bother to form a party?In addition, you and Set seem to be quite skilled. Rather than splitting up and resting comfortably in the cabin, even if it's inconvenient, taking a break with you two in the mountains will provide more safety. Don't worry so much."

"That's right. Even if we take a break in the mountain, it's already been shown that monsters won't come near us if Set is around. That said, I'm a Dwarf, so there's not much of a difference to me resting in the cabin or in the mountains."

"Tch, this is why they say Dwarves are stubborn in build and in nature. It's painful for a maiden like me to take a break in the mountains with my soft skin."

Although she was wearing leather armour made from the skin of a high rank monster, Freon lamented as she stretched her arms out.

"Keh, what maiden. This idiot already passed her thirties and missed her chance of getting married ages ago."

"Ahh? And what about you? Do you want me to beat your brains out?"

It seemed that Brazos' words had struck a sore point. Freon stared at the Dwarf, smiling with murderous eyes.

"Oh I'm scared. If you want to kill something that much, you can go kill some monsters. Hey, Rei. If Set stays here there might be a negative effect on him. Let's leave now. Also, we might be killed by that woman who has yet to marry if we stay."

"Ah, Ahh."

Hahaha~, Brazos laughed and left the area while pulling Rei along. Freon chased after Brazos with the eyes of an Ogre.

(Indeed, they gave up their rest time in the cabin to come with me and Set.They are quite whimsical.)

Despite thinking that, Rei didn't feel that was a bad thing.

Chapter 130

"Rei, wake up. It will be time soon."

At that voice, Rei's consciousness woke up from his deep sleep.

When Rei opened his eyes, he saw a Dwarf's beard.

".....Brazos?"

"Yes. I woke you up because it's almost time for the night attack."

"Gururu~"

At Brazos' words, Set gave a cry as if he couldn't wait for the fight to start. The soft cry reached Rei's eyes through Set's soft belly, which Rei had been using as a pillow.

"What about Freon?"

Pachi~, he looked around while hearing the crackling sounds from the campfire. He couldn't see the figure of Freon, who had been sleeping here as well.

"Ahh, Freon already got up to prepare for various things. Indeed, women are troublesome!"

Before he could finish, Brazos was hit on the head by a tree branch that was thrown from the dark. Freon came out from the darkness while looking at Brazos.

"Seriously, stop making fun of women. This brutish old man."

"Guh.....that may be true but you still shouldn't throw tree branches at me."

Holding his head, Brazos picked up the tree branch that had fallen to the ground and threw it into the bonfire.

"Enough with that idiot.....it's about time, any problems?"

Freon asked Rei as she pulled her long sword out from her waist to check it.

With a smile, Rei gave a small nod.

"I have no problems. How about we have a light meal before going to subjugate the Harpies?"

Rei took out a huge pot from the Misty Ring while saying that. The pot was filled with the stewed dish he had bought in the restaurant before he left the city of Gimuru. At the same time, he took out plates and spoons for soup as well as a ladle to serve the stew to the others.

"Gururururu~"

The rich aroma of the stew drifted into the surroundings and Set gave a cry that he wanted some.

"Here, it's hot so be careful."

Rei dished out more meat onto a plate for Set. At the same time, Freon and Brazos were licking their lips at the stew.

"It's delicious. It would be great if I could drink some liquor with this."

"Ahh, it's delicious. There's no way I could usually eat such food when camping out at night.Well, I guess Rei can keep a variety of things in his item box. However, Brazos. Liquor is banned."

"Hmph, we'll be fighting after this so let's just have one cup to encourage ourselves."

"What are you going to do if Rei gets hopeless drunk like last time. Seriously."

Despite sighing, Freon ate the meat and vegetables contentedly.

"Having to camp out at night for a request, being able to eat hot, freshly cooked food is a big morale boost. I feel more motivation."

"That's right. Meals are also considered important in the army and what Freon said isn't wrong."

".....Because it's normal for me to camp at night with my item box, I don't really feel that it's that weird....."

At their envy, Rei muttered that in surprise. The next moment, Freon and Brazos looked at him in amazement.

"Rei, there's no point in telling other adventurers that it's normal because you have an item box.....that's like the difference between rank A and rank H. No, you're much more well off than that."

"That's right. In fact, as Freon said, with this item box, you don't even need to carry anything around with you.Rei himself doesn't seem to be aware of that fact though."

Feeling that the situation wasn't good for him, he stuffed the meat that had been cooked until that it could be cut with a spoon, he wasn't sure what meat it was, into his mouth and swallowed it before speaking up again.

"By the way, what do adventurers normally eat when camping at night? As you know, I basically act solo. Even if I form a party, it's usually temporary, so I would still use my item box. I don't really understand what food ordinary adventurers would have to eat."

You're clearly trying to change the subject. Freon and Brazos both looked at Rei. Freon scooped some potatoes out of the stew before speaking.

"It's pretty much hard, baked bread. You would soften it with water to eat it.If there was someone good at hunting in the party, you would catch wild birds and animals to cook and eat. Ah, you could also eat the meat of some monsters you encounter and kill along the way. However, I guess that would only happen if you were lucky? Even if I say monsters, the meat of Goblins, for example, is not really edible. It's also rare for adventurers to have salt on them to use to cook meat."

".....Why don't they just carry salt with them?"

Rei asked Freon. Actually, the Misty Ring contained a variety of spices that could be bought in the city of Gimuru.....

(I think it would be better not to tell them about this.)

"I can understand why you would ask that. In fact, if it's just a bottle of salt, it doesn't really make much of a difference to what you carry. That is true regarding ordinary requests. But it's not uncommon for the weight difference of that one bottle to have an effect in a life or death battle. Because of that, at the very least, Crushing Warriors doesn't bring any along in order to reduce baggage as much as possible."

Brazos words felt like an elder giving advice to the youths. But.....

"Considering all that, you shouldn't bring any bottles of liquor along."

It was spoiled by a single sentence from Freon.

"Ridiculous! Liquor and salt are two different things!"

While talking like that, they finished eating after about 10 minutes. Rei put the pot, which still had a lot of stew, the plates and spoons back into the Misty Ring.

"Now then. You two, are you ready?"

Rei and Freon nodded at Brazos question. Set answered with a cry.

Each of them held their weapons in their hands, ready to retaliate against any monsters that might jump at them from the forest at night.

"Well then, lets go. It's already midnight. the Harpies are probably asleep as well."

"I don't have any issues.....but how do we attack? Are we going to kill the Harpies outside the nest one at a time?"

"That's the plan, do you have any other ideas?"

Brazos asked as he extinguished the fire by covering it in sand. Rei nodded as he watched on.

"Ahh. I don't know if you know, but I'm not a pure warrior, I'm a magic warrior. I also specialise in fire magic..... Thanks to someone, I can also use some wind magic."

".....In other words, you want to throw magic into the Harpies nest?"

Extinguishing the fire, he turned to look at Rei with the eyes of a veteran adventurer compared to the friendly atmosphere he had earlier.

"Ahh. Isn't the Harpies' nest on the mountain summit? There shouldn't be a danger of spreading fire around."

"Hmm.....that's right. It certainly wouldn't be a problem if that went well....."

Brazos though as he glanced towards the mountain summit. However, Freon interjected here.

"It's no good. Brazos, have you forgotten the stories we heard from the miners? This mountain has a strong wind that blows down from the summit to the base at night. Consider what would happen if you used fire magic here. If

his control was off by even the slightest amount, we would cause a forest fire.No, it would be good if we got off with just a forest fire. The mine could also become useless due to the fire. What kind of penalty would we receive from the guild?"

".....I see. Because of the wind blowing down, there is a risk of causing a fire if fire magic is used. It's not that great but without using magic, we'll have to kill them one by one."

"However.....in that case, is it possible to kill all the Harpies? Although you said that we would quietly taken them out from outermost ones, we can't be sure that they won't notice."

"However, what would you do if a forest fire happened like what Freon said?"

Rei was silent at Brazos words.

(It's true that the biggest reason to clear out the Harpies nest is to open up the mine again. Thinking about it, it really isn't that good to use large scale fire magic here.Damn it, I could manage it somehow if there wasn't a wind blowing down.)

"I understand. Let's head for the Harpies nest for now. If we go there, we may come up with something good."

".....Well, that's fine. Just as I said before, safety is the top priority. Because it might cause a forest fire, don't use any large scale fire magic."

"Ah. I understand that."

"Gururururu~?"

Perhaps Set felt sorry for Rei at Brazos' reply, he gave a cry asking if Rei was okay. Rei rubbed Set's head.

"What, don't mind it. Besides, this time I'm not working solo but in a temporary party with the members of Crushing Warriors. I'll follow the leader's instructions."

Rei scratched Set's head with a smile as he said that.

"I see, if you were acting solo, then you should act according to what you think. However, as you said, you're currently a member of Crushing Warriors.In addition, we are quite skilled adventurers. You should follow us on this don't you think?"

"You're almost as skilled as a mature woman."

"Shut up old man. I'll split your head in two."

The moment when she heard the words 'mature woman', Freon brought up the sword in her hands. She scowled at Brazos while emanating blood thirst.

As expected, even Brazos fell back a bit as cold sweat dripped down his back.

"M-My bad. I said too much. I know that Freon is still young and youthful."

".....There's no next time drunk old man."

Glaring at Brazos, Freon took a deep breath.

"Hey, it will be bad if we head up to the summit carelessly. If we keep talking like this, we will be here until dawn."

"....."

Brazos looked like he wanted to say something to Freon, but if he said something unnecessary again, Freon might really swing her sword down. Feeling instinctive fear, he kept quiet.

Rei kept his silence. Seeing him like that, Set also didn't make a sound..

Like that, Brazos, Rei, Set and Freon went up the mountain path in that order.

From the point they entered the mountains to the mine, a path had been created by the miners repeatedly trekking through the same path. But since people hadn't come through for a while, the path didn't exist anymore. At most it was now an animal trail.

The three people and one animal continued on their way.

"Tch, these branches and vines are annoying."

Swinging her sword, Freon cut through the obstacles in their way. Originally, this would be done by Brazos, who had the greater physical strength. However, even after Brazos had clear the path, the difference in height between the two of them meant that Freon had to clear the path a second time for her to get through.

Still, she was a C rank adventurer. For ordinary people who weren't adventurers, they would likely run out of stamina at the pace they were climbing the mountain.....it about an hour, the summit of the mountain came

into view.

".....Set, is quite amazing."

While wiping away his sweat with a cloth Rei had handed him, Brazos looked at Set in admiration.

Normally, night time was the time for monsters. In addition, there were many monsters that would become more ferocious compared to in the daytime. Right now, they were in a mountain. Normally, they wouldn't be able to climb a mountain with as few attacks from monsters as they had.

.....Still, they were attacked several times by some low rank monsters which couldn't feel Set's strength.

The low rank monsters didn't have the tasty meat that Set enjoyed. Because of that, Rei just cut out the magic stone and proofs of subjugation before leaving the corpses where they were.....perhaps they would satisfy the stomachs of other monsters around.

"Gururu~"

Leave it to me, Set seemed to say with a cry. Rei smiled at that confident cry as he cut away the bushes.....

"I see it."

They finally arrived at the mountain summit.

Chapter 131

The summit of the mountain where the Harpies nested. There were few plants nearby and there were several large rocks in the area. It looked completely like a wasteland.

There was a cave at the top of the mountain. There were three Harpies nearby. Two stood to the left and right of the cave entrance. The last one stood slightly further away from the cave entrance. In this situation, Rei and the others looked on from a distance further way where trees still grew thick.

".....There are Harpies on guard, it seems?"

Brazos nodded at Freon's words as he watched the three Harpies near the entrance of the cave.

"Seems to be so. As you can see, Harpies have a human's head and body and are intelligent monsters. It's not surprising that they understand the concept of guards."

"Is that so? Now that I think about it, even Goblins will have guards, so it's reasonable if I think about it."

"That said, these guards are still a nuisance.What will we do? I don't want to kill them only to alert the rest of their friends."

Rei turned to look at the cave as he muttered.

There were no plant around the cave, particularly where the Harpies stood guard. All there was on the ground were the bones of animals and monsters that the Harpies had eaten.There also seemed to be bones belonging to people. Harpies seemed to eat the internal organs and skin in addition to the flesh. This was a blessing for their party that there were only bones rolling around and no foul odour.

".....I don't see anything that might burn near the nest, in this situation I don't think we need to worry about causing a fire? If that cave is the Harpies' nest, I

think it would be best to quickly take down the guards and then throw fire magic into the cave."

Looking around after hearing Rei's words, Freon thought about it.

Freon and Brazos had dismissed Rei's previous proposal because they had thought that the Harpies' nest was built on the tall trees growing near the top.....the situation had changed now that the Harpies' nest was in a cave.

Rei's weapon was a scythe. Brazos' weapon was a huge hammer. Set had a huge body over 2m in size. Although they couldn't predict how much space was inside the cave, it would still be difficult for the three people and one animal to fight at the same time.

(Well, since the Harpies built a nest inside, there's no doubt that there would be enough room for them to fly inside.

Freon grasped her long sword as she stared at the cave.

".....What will we do? I don't really want to go inside that cave."

Rei grasped his Death Scythe. Their weapons were all similarly large.

"That's right.Freon, as Rei said, there's no need to worry about causing a fire. All the more because it's a cave. On the other hand, I feel that we can wipe them in one stroke like this."

"That, is true. I certainly don't know what would happen if we have to go inside the cave. It would be suicidal to have to fight inside there. As long as the Harpies are inside, there should be enough room to fly. But looking at the entrance, it's quite narrow.In that case, the worst case is that the entrance is narrow but there is room for Harpies to freely fly further up inside.It can't be helped. Let's use Rei's suggestion then?"

Freon said that with a sigh. At those words, Rei nodded and turned to look at the three Harpy guards.

"Well, then.....what do we do with the guards. If we want to use my magic to make a surprise attack on them, the three of them will definitely try to stop me from casting magic into the cave."

".....Rei, are there any projectile weapons in your itembox?"

"Hmm, that's right. There are spears I can throw."

Rei answered Freon's question as he turned to his Misty Ring. In the bracelet, there were quite a few spear that he had collected from the bandits that had been killed during his rank up test. Regarding throwing the spears, he had already confirmed their usefulness when he had gone to the dungeon with Elena.

"Besides that, there's also wind magic.....but it would be a bit difficult from this range."

It was about 200m from the bushes where Rei and the others were to the cave. It wasn't much of a problem for Rei to throw a spear that far. Fire magic had an emphasis on power. However, it was out of range for the Death Scythe's Flying Slash, which he was masking as wind magic.

Alternatively, if he could use a large scale fire magic, the distance of 200m would be nothing. However, there was no doubt that the Harpies inside the cave would notice if he did that.

".....Now then, what do we do? We can't hesitate here."

"Right now, it's not like we have no options. But even then, we will need some luck."

"What? We don't have any other options so if you have a better idea, we will use it. Please tell us."

At Freon's words, Rei turned towards the quiet Set.

"The easiest way would be for Freon and Brazos to throw the spears to strike the Harpies....."

The two of them shook their heads at Rei's words.

"To throw something like that, it would be impossible to hit our target unless we had taken special training."

"That's right. I'm confident in my strength, but even I have to say that it would be difficult hit them accurately."

(In my case, I can easily hit them from here.....)

Although Rei thought to himself, he knew it was due to the physical performance of the body that Zepairu had made so he didn't say it.

"Then this is the other choice.....first of all, I can kill one with a throwing spear from here so set me aside. Set will attack from above and take one of the remaining two. The last one.....either Freon or Brazos, will attack while riding on Set."

"What!"

"Are you serious!?"

Freon and Brazos raised surprised voices at Rei's words. After all, they had just been told to ride on the back of a Griffon.

However, it was true that this was the best way to ensure that they killed all the Harpy guards. The two of them looked at each other to push the role of the surprise attacker to the other. But.....

"Freon will conduct the surprise attack."

Rei's words decided who would conduct the surprise attack.

"Wait a moment! Why was I picked!"

In order to avoid being heard by the Harpies, Freon grabbed Rei's shoulders while shouting quietly. Next to her, Brazos gave a sigh of relief.

"Calm down, the reason is simple. Aside from strength, for a Dwarf to make a sneak attack.....moreover, as a Human, Freon has the better agility required to attack while riding on Set."

"Mu~, that certainly is true.....what, like this.....I don't feel like I'm happy about it at all."

"Why don't you swap with me then? I don't mind at all. Or should I say, would you be fine with me riding on your back Set? I heard that a Dragon Knight's dragon would refuse anyone else riding on it aside from its knight."

"Gururu~"

Leave it to me, Set seemed to say with a cry.

To Set, someone riding on his back wasn't that special a thing.

"In that case, wait here with Rei."

Rei shook his head at Brazos words and handed him a spear he had taken out from the Misty Ring.

"Rei?"

"With my throw and Set's attack, we will definitely kill two Harpies. However, Freon riding on Set.....I mean, won't this be the first time she has flown in the sky?"

"Of course! I mean, this isn't something you can experience easily!"

Freon shouted loudly at Rei's words.

"That's why. Just in case, Brazos needs to be ready to throw a spear at any time as well. If Freon's surprise attack fails, then it's sink or swim if we want to stop them from calling for help."

"Wait a moment. If I fail to kill the Harpy I'm aiming for.....in that situation, I'll be right next to the target Brazos is aiming for! You know that Brazos almost never throws spears right? Do you want to kill me Rei!"

".....About that, I can only ask you leave the area as soon as possible if you fail to kill the Harpy."

"Tch, seriously. I understand.Brazos. If you hit me, no drinking for three months."

"Mu.....mu....."

Brazos wanted to retort, but felt that he would be hit if he talked back right now. However, even being forbidden to drink for a few days would kill him. If he couldn't drink for 3 months, he would die for sure. While feeling the dilemma, he received the spear from Rei without any complaints.

"Anyway, these are some cheap spears Rei."

Brazos muttered when he touched the spear Rei passed him. He could understand the quality of the spear just by touching it. Maybe that was one of the advantages Dwarven blacksmiths had.

"They belonged to the bandits I defeated during my rank up test. I know the quality is bad. Or rather, if they were of good quality, I can't throw them as disposable weapons."

"No, throwing spears are usually lighter, it's common to use short spears. In the first place, as projectile weapons, bow and arrows are better."

"But don't you have to use both hands with a bow and arrow? Not to boast, but with my strength, I can kill them with a single blow."

Taking out a spear for himself, Rei turned to look at the Harpies.

"Set will attack the one closest to the cave entrance.....that is, the one on the right."

"Guru~"

"Freon will take the one to the left of the entrance."

"Ahh, okay. I understand. You should be prepared for the worst!"

Freon half nodded in mild desperation.

Looking at Freon, Brazos mumbled.

"In times like this, experience adventurers would normally be the ones giving instructions."

"Don't say that. In the first place, it's wrong to call Rei a rookie."

Saying those words out with a sigh, Freon went towards Set.

"Set, I've never rode a monster like you. So, I'm not familiar with it.....is that still okay?"

"Gurururu~"

Leave to me, Set seemed to say with a cry.

"Well then, because Set and I will go up.....that, I'll leave the Harpies inside to you."

"Ah.Right, I forgot to mention. In the end, this is only a surprise attack."

Freon lightly tapped the hood over Rei's head when he said that.

"I know already. You don't have to worry about all that. Don't tell me that because it's a surprise attack that you can still defeat them if I fail."

".....Sorry. That's right, you've been an adventurer much longer than I have so you know what you can do."

As Rei said that, he remembered that he had only been in Gimuru for several months. Because of that, he had only been an adventurer for several months.

Normally, he would still be stuck at F rank.

"Well, I'll show you what an expert can do.Set, let's go."

"Guru~"

Giving a cry, Set went back down the path that they had come up with Freon. He needed to go somewhere where he could fly up without the Harpies seeing him.

Seeing them off, they watched the Harpies as they hid behind the trees bushes. About five minutes later, Brazos spoke up.

"Rei."

"Is there anything wrong?"

"No, that's nothing wrong.That is, pardon me. After this request is over, why don't you stay with Crushing Warriors?"

Brazos turned to look at Rei intently with a serious expression.

"In other words, not as a temporary member?"

"Ah. You're smart and you have good judgement. There's no need to talk about fighting strength. There is also Set."

"....."

"You won't say that you will work solo forever right? You're still D rank so you can manage somehow. But with your skills, you'll eventually reach C, B and A rank. At that point in time, if you were still solo.....you know what I want to say?"

(It's true that I can get along with the two of them quite nicely.Liquor aside. But.....)

Thinking to himself, Rei eventually spoke up.

"Well, I will give an answer after we finish this request."

For now, he decided to shelve the issue.

".....Well, that's fine. That aside, it should be time soon."

Regardless if it was an ability peculiar to Dwarves, Brazos looked up into the dark night sky.

Rei turned his eyes to look as well and saw Set flying above. On his back, he could see Freon clinging to Set.

For an ordinary human, they wouldn't be able to see that far in the dark. However, the body that Zepairu had made for Rei easily broke that common

sense.

From Rei's movements, Brazos realised that Rei had night vision as good as his. However, he now focused on the surprise attack and clenched the spear that Rei had given him in one hand without saying anything, ready to throw it at any time.

Beside him, Rei stood by, ready to throw his spear at any time.....

"Here it comes!"

With Brazos' voice, Set glided down without a sound and use his sharp forefoot to crush the head of a Harpy protecting the cave entrance. At the same time, Freon jumped off his back and swung down at the head of the other Harpy.

As expected, it was impossible to control her posture in the air so she couldn't cut it's head off. Even so, the Harpy Freon targeted was slashed from its neck down to its body, killing it instantly.

"Ky~!?"

The last one was standing a bit further away. The moment it tried to turn around to see what had happened, the spear thrown by Rei destroyed its head, splattering brains, body fluids and the rest of the contents in its head into the surroundings.

Chapter 132

".....Phew. It's a good thing it didn't turn around."

Brazos gave a sigh of relief as he watched the fight end in a moment.

He had been worried about Freon's surprise attack from the air, as the aim had been to cut off its head. Still, she had slashed the Harpy from neck to chest, killing it instantly.

A single attack by Set's claws had destroyed the Harpy's head as easily as cracking raw eggs. The Harpy Rei had aimed for also had its head destroyed from the impact of the spear as it penetrated it.

Brazos gave a sigh of relief, as he aimed the spear in his hands towards the cave entrance. He looked carefully at the cave entrance.

After killing the Harpies, Freon immediately moved to a position not visible from the entrance. Set had flown back into the air after crushing the Harpies head with his claws.

"It seems we haven't been noticed."

They watched the cave entrance for about half a minute with bated breaths. After confirming that no other Harpies had come out, Rei gave a sigh of relief.

Freon signaled them with her hands to come over to the cave entrance.

"We should go."

"Mm."

Rei and Brazos looked at each other before heading over to Freon's location.

"Even so, the Harpy that you killed managed to get a short cry out....."

"Ah. My timing was a bit off. Do you think it would be heard inside?"

As it was a wasteland, they ran across the bare ground where not much grass grew. Rei asked in a low voice and Brazos shook his head.

"Because it heard some sounds from its companions, I think its cry was

something like 'What happened?'. That's what it sounded like. If that was the case, because it was asking its companions, I don't think it was heard inside the cave.But that's if there were no Harpies inside the cave right after the entrance."

"I hope so."

As they talked, they arrived at the shadow of the cave. Freon greeted the two of them with a smile.

"How about that. I told you you could leave it to me. Was it a quick strike?"

".....Were you aiming for the head?"

"Ah!? It's hard to strike the head, I was aiming for its neck from the beginning."

As Freon yelled in a quiet voice, Rei stored the Harpies that Set and Freon had crushed and slashed into the Misty Ring to stop the smell of blood from spreading.

While the two of them continued their argument, he went to store the corpse of the Harpy that he had killed with a spear throw.

"The spear.....I guess it's no use."

He looked around for the spear that that destroyed the Harpy's head. However, it hadn't fallen nearby and there was no sign of it piercing a tree or hitting the cave. Rei guessed that because of its speed after hitting the Harpy, it had kept on going somewhere, so he gave up the idea of retrieving it.

Anyhow, as he had said to Brazos, they were cheap spears that he had just taken from bandits. As for their quality, it was barely a usable item. A weapon shop or blacksmith with sharp eyes could easily tell that they were poor quality items.

"What's wrong?"

Seeing Rei come back with a sigh, Freon asked since her argument with Brazos had finished. Seeing Brazos with a depressed expression nearby, it was obvious who had won the argument.

"No, nothing at all. I thought I might be able to recover the spear I threw at the Harpy, but it looks like that is impossible."

Saying that, he shook his head as he saw Set come back down from the night sky.

"I see. Well, leaving that aside.We've cleared out the guards."

Freon turned to look at the entrance to the cave.

Following that look, Rei gave a small nod. Next to Freon, Brazos seemed to have already recovered from his loss in the argument and carried his favourite Earthshaker Hammer with him. Beside Rei, Set landed, flapping his wings with barely a sound. He also looked towards the cave entrance with sharp eyes, ready to move into action at any time.

".....Okay, now it's up to Rei. Blast your magic into the cave. As for the power level, I'll leave it to you. But considering the collection of materials, try to avoid collapsing the cave as much as possible. Even if the rewards for the request are cheap, I still want to get something from the materials and magic stones."

"Depending on the reward, the alcohol I can drink changes as well."

"Shut up."

At Brazos' words, Freon gave a quiet retort before turning to Rei.

"Setting that aside the power of your magic, there's the cave. Since we don't know how big the inside of the cave is, we have to pray that we burn out all the Harpies."

".....Hmm. Is it impossible to explore the inside of the cave?"

"Rei, you don't have to listen to the words of this old drunk. Any how, I hope you can take out as many Harpies as you can."

"Ahh, no problem. I will begin to prepare right away."

Set gave a small cry and the two of them nodded at Rei's words. Rei started to cast his magic.

'Fire, thy power is my strength. Burn my magic power according to my will and burn the enemy. Your power is to spread fire, hellfire. Rouse your heat with my magic power.'

At the same time as he cast the magic, 10 fireballs made from magic power appeared in front of the Death Scythe.

They were literally the same as Rei's 'Fireball' magic except 10 of them. Even

though it was night, the cave surroundings lit up rapidly. At the same time, with the heat from the flames, the surrounding temperature grew along with the brightness.

"Hey-! Hey Rei-! Is this really okay!"

10 fireballs floated around Rei's Death Scythe. Each one was the size of a human head and the floated as if swimming through the air.

'10 Fireballs!'

TLN: The author clearly didn't bother to think of a better name.

At the same time the magic was completed, the 10 fireballs flew through the sky towards the cave entrance. It looked as if the fireballs had their own will and wanted to enter into the cave.....eventually, the brightness disappeared from the cave entrance and the rising heat was scattered by the night autumn wind.

"I don't know how big the inside of the cave is, so some flames might come out from the entrance. We should move a bit further away."

"O-Oh."

"I understand."

Freon and Brazos ran for the bushes.....and the next moment.

Roar-!

An explosive sound shook their ears. It wasn't just one or two, there were several. The fireballs that had flown into the cave had probably caused a chain of explosions.

"Kikiki~!?"

He heard some confused screams from the Harpies that had been sleeping, but fortunately, there were no Harpies that left the cave entrance, where Rei was waiting with the Death Scythe.

.....Well, that was at the entrance that Rei was waiting at.

"Rei, above!"

At Freon's warning from the bushes behind, Rei looked into the night sky. Beside him, Set looked into the sky as well.

In the night sky that was illuminated by the flames bursting out from the cave, the figure of Harpies with their birdlike wings could be seen. And what illuminated them was not just flames coming out from the cave entrance Rei was at. From Rei's location, he could see light coming out from the other side of the cave.

"I see. This entrance may not be the only one into the cave."

As he said that, the Harpies, who judged Rei to be the one who had killed their friends, dived towards him.

"Kikiki~."

They were a lot more delicate and couldn't compare to Set, but the tip of a Harpy's claws were still sharp enough to pierce into enemies.....

"Haah!"

Such an attack was useless as the Death Scythe was swung.

The blade, swung with magic power, cut through the body of the diving Harpy, slicing through in an instant. The Harpy's body split into two parts, upper and lower as it hit the ground, sliding along and scattering blood and offal everywhere.

"Haaaaaaah-!"

Behind Rei, Freon raised a shout as she ran through the body of a Harpy until the tip of her sword came out the other side.

Rei swung the Death Scythe to flick away the Harpy blood that was on the blade before looking up into the sky. There were still nearly 20 Harpies flying in the sky, watching for an opportunity to attack Rei and the others.

".....It looks like most of the Harpies were sleeping but there were some near the other entries."

While carrying the Earthshaker Hammer on his shoulder, Brazos came up to Rei and quietly told him with a bitter look.

The blood and feather of Harpies seemed to be stuck to his hammer, quite obvious after the fight.

"GURURURURURU~!"

Set flapped his wings as he pounced towards the Harpies flying in the sky.

"There seems to be quite a lot."

Brazos murmured as he watched Set. Set swung his claws and used his beak to attack, not giving the Harpies a chance to evade, killing a Harpy with a single strike from his claws.

"Even if you say that, we're not outnumbered by a lot. No, if they stay in the sky, that makes it even easier."

"Rei?"

"I'm going to use a slightly bigger magic. I'll be relying on you for defense for a while."

At Rei's words, they looked up into the sky that was illuminated by the fire burning inside the cave.

".....I see. Well, leave it to us."

As veteran adventurers, they understood what Rei was planning with just those words.

With a smile, Rei increased his magic power output and spoke.

'Dancing flames, dance. Light up the surroundings with your magnificent dance, burn as you dance and captivate the people.'

Set heard the incantation and remembered what magic Rei was using. It was the magic Rei had used when they had left the Forest of Monsters.

There were differences between the forest and mountains, but it was quite coincidental that the situation resembled when they were escaping the Forest of Monsters.

Set saw that and gave a cry, momentarily frightening the Harpies before diving towards the ground in that gap. Rei set out the range of the magic and spoke the last keywords.

'Dance Fire Snake!'

At the same time he invoked his magic, nearly 100 human sized flames

appeared. It was a lot less compared to when he had used it in the Forest of Monsters, but there were still five times more flames than there were Harpies. The flames produced by Rei swayed around as they danced and circled around the area he had set. And.....

"Kikiyi~!?"

When the numerous flames appeared, it was impossible for the Harpies to avoid all of them. When a Harpy touched the flames.....the fire spread to the whole body the next moment, burning them up in seconds.

"No wonder.....I've been an adventurer for a long time, but I've only seen such intense fire magic a few times."

".....Ah. To be honest, I underestimated Rei's skills."

Brazos and Freon murmured in surprise.

There were several dead Harpies around Freon, which they had just killed. Freon wasn't too tired and kept her guard up as she watched the flock of Harpies burn up in the sky.

"But, it's impossible to strip the materials, magic stones and proofs of subjugation when they are burned to this state."

Brazos said that unintentionally as he saw the Harpies crumble when they hit the ground.

"There's no helping it. If we had to have a straight up fight against the Harpies, it probably have become really troublesome. For instance, if the Harpies were frightened by Set and ran away or they built a nest somewhere else. Given that, it wasn't a bad choice for Rei to gather them all up and use his magic to prevent them from escaping."

".....Well, we shouldn't get our priorities backwards, we did come here to clear out the Harpies."

Holding the Death Scythe, Rei said that as he looked around for any abnormalities.

Despite just casting a magic that was big enough to wipe out nearly 20 Harpies and burn them to charcoal, Rei didn't look tired at all.

"Even though he used such a powerful magic, it looks like he can still keep going."

While looking at Rei, Freon muttered in amazement.

Chapter 133

From the mountain summit, the sun could be seen rising from the eastern sky.

Illuminated by the sun, the result of the death fight from the surprise attack.....became clear.

Almost no plants grew around the cave at the summit of the mountain. Something like a burnt, black sand was scattered around the area.

A large number of fireballs were thrown into the cave but more than 20 Harpies had escaped somehow. Rei used the large scale magic 'Dancing Fire Snakes' to attack the Harpies which targeted him in their confusion and anger due to the surprise attack. As a result, their corpses were turned into charcoal and shattered from the impact of falling to the ground.

Originally, they were D rank monsters, so their combat power fell below that of Crushing Warriors, who were a C rank party. It was the same for Rei and Set, who were outside the norm, and the result was spread before their eyes.

".....It's getting brighter."

Freon muttered as the surroundings started to become easier to see due to the morning sun.

"Mm.First of all, let's strip of the materials then go to sleep. I would like to sleep right away, but monsters will be attracted by the smell of blood and would eat all the Harpies and their materials."

While sighing, Brazos muttered to himself as he looked at a Harpy that had been smashed by his Earthshaker Hammer.

The night time surprise attack had succeeded with little difficulty. But as the surroundings were still wrapped in darkness, they had to stay on guard and watch out for attacks by monsters attracted by the smell of Harpy blood drifting around.

At the same time, while the chance was small, there could also be surviving Harpies hidden somewhere. Basically, they were not high ranking monsters and weren't much of a threat unless in a flock. Still, it wasn't a bad thing to stay on guard as Harpies had the big advantage of being able to fly in the sky.

It would be stupid if they were to be caught in an surprise attack after conducting one themselves.

".....I want to drink some alcohol soon."

Seeing Brazos look around with a tired expression, Rei spoke up as he placed the Death Scythe on his shoulder.

"In that case, how about we keep the Harpy corpses in the Misty Ring for now? We can strip the materials, proofs of subjugation and magic stones after taking a rest."

At Rei's words, Brazos' bearded face turned cheerful. Although Freon had also rested yesterday afternoon, it was probably tough for her as well after staying up all night. She spoke up with a smile.

"That's right. If we had to strip materials while tired, it wouldn't be good if we were attacked by monsters at the same time. I agree with Rei's opinion."

"Of course, I have no complaints either."

In the end, they decided on that. Rei gathered and stored the three Harpies they killed in the initial surprise attack, the ones that escaped from the cave and the ones that had been burnt up by his magic into the Misty Ring.

It was fortunate that some time had passed since the fight had ended. In the meantime, most of the blood had drained and Rei didn't get too dirty as he stored them away.

When he finally finished storing the 10 intact Harpy corpses into the Misty Ring, the three of them finally gave a sigh of relief.

"Gururururururu~."

As Set watched the three of them, he stretched like a cat.

"Well then, let's get away from here first. As for the condition of the cave, it will be fine."

".....Are you sure?"

Should we check the cave before taking a break? Although Rei asked with that meaning implied, Brazos nodded that there was no problems as he carried the Eathshaker Hammer to his shoulder.

"In the first place, you used fire magic. The survivors from the nest have already attacked us. If they were really lucky, there may be some Harpies who survived somehow and chose not to attack us.....if they were that lucky, there would only be a few of them at most."

"I guess. At the very least, I don't think they could survive such flames."

At Brazos' words, Freon agreed with a nod.

"No, well, this request was something Crushing Warriors took, I'm only a temporary member so I don't mind the decision....."

"That's it. Well, let's leave here as soon as possible. If the monsters get drunk on the smell of blood, they'll come out even if Set is here."

Pulling Rei's arm, Brazos headed towards the bushes where they had been hiding earlier.

Freon and Set chased after them and they finally arrived at a clearing.

"Well then, let's take a break. We'll be busy after we get up so rest as much as you can. As for the watch, can we leave it to Set?"

On the way here, Brazos had heard stories about Set. When he saw Rei nod, he leaned against the trunk of a tree that grew nearby, closed his eyes and fell asleep.

"....."

Rei was stunned at the short time it had taken him to fall asleep. Freon seemed to be used to it already and also leaned against a nearby tree.

"Sleeping is also part of an adventurer's work. Brazos' ability to fall asleep in a few seconds is also a skill. We'll definitely be busy after we wake up so you should also sleep quickly to restore your stamina."

Saying that, Freon also fell asleep a few minutes after closing her eyes.

Still, both Brazos and Freon were adventurers and slept while holding on to

their weapons. In case they sensed danger, they could respond immediately.

".....That's right, I should also sleep. Set, we'll leave the watch to you."

"Gururu~"

Set basically didn't have to take time to sleep like humans did, making him the ideal watch for situations like this. While Set often slept in the city while waiting for Rei, or in the stables of the Dusk Wheat inn, sleep was just a kind of enjoyment for him. For Set, just a few hours of sleep each day was enough.

Stroking Set's head, Rei gave him a few extra pieces of bread from the Misty Ring as a bonus, which he had received when he had bought the stew in Gimuru before starting this request. Rei then closed his eyes after leaning against a tree trunk like Freon and Brazos.

Making sure he was holding onto the Death Scythe, to deal with the enemy in case they were attacked.....he naturally fell asleep after about 10 minutes.

"Guru~"

Looking at Rei, Set lay down on the ground while eating the bread so as to not disturb his favourite partner and closed his eyes.

Among monsters, some could use optical camouflage like the mantis they had encountered on the way to the dungeon. In addition, while not flawless as some insects, there were also monsters that could mimic that. Where trees grew thick in the mountains and visibility was low, Set had realised that hearing, smell and instinct was more effective than sight. And.....

".....-!?"

He leapt up without a sound. Set swung his claw down at the head of a Goblin who was watching Rei from the bushes.

Gokya-, the sound of a Goblin's head bursting could be heard. After making sure that Rei hadn't woken up from the sound, Set left the corpse of the Goblin where it was and went back to his original position before lying down and closing his eyes,

"....."

His kind partner who always petted him. It was fine to expose himself to any

danger to protect Rei. Like that, lying down on the mountainside with his eyes closed, Set looked out for signs of monsters coming nearby with sense of hearing and smell.

Fortunately, aside from the first Goblin he killed, no other monsters came close. Most monsters avoided them after sensing Set. After about 3 hours, they started to wake up.

".....Mm....."

Rei's consciousness quickly awakened. Rei opened his eyes and saw Brazos tending to the campfire nearby.

"Mm? Did you wake up? You woke up at a good time. Could you get something out of the item box for me? Some alcohol if possible....."

As Brazos was saying that with a smile, a tree branch flew out from the trees and hit him in the back of the head.

The speed of the tree branch and Brazos' unique hard head. as a result of the two colliding, the branch broke in two.

"Don't be stupid. Seriously, just when I take my eyes off you for a moment. I won't say that after we get back to the city, but please wait until we leave the mountains at least."

Needless to say, the person who appeared from the bushes was Brazos' fellow party member. It was Freon, the other member of Crushing Warriors.

"Here, wipe your face with it."

As she said that, she threw a wet cloth to Rei. Rei raised his eyebrows when he felt its coldness.

Because it was already autumn, the surrounding temperature was surprisingly colder than when he had gone to the dungeon. It could be related to the fact that they were near the top of a mountain, but the water was still colder than expected.

(Speaking of that, I've slept for several hours in this cold weather.....and I haven't caught a cold. I should thank Zepairu for making this high performance body.)

Thinking to himself, he looked towards Brazos. Perhaps he was more robust than ordinary Humans because he was a Dwarf. Rei had that feeling.

(However.....)

Next, he looked at Freon.

It was true that she was tall for a woman and had a physique stronger than most other warriors. However, she was still a Human and Rei didn't think that she didn't care about the cold at all.....

(Well, it's a different world, maybe resistance against viruses is higher.)

Rei moved to the campfire after wiping his face with the wet cloth Freon had passed him.

"Ahh, Rei. Do you have a small bucket or something? There's a river a bit further away and I want to get some water to boil to warm us up....."

Freon said that but Rei immediately shook his head.

That was because he had silently take a pot out. In addition, it was a pot with plenty of fresh vegetable soup instead of hot water that Freon had been thinking of.

Although it was different from the stew they had eaten last night, the sweet smell particular to vegetable soup drifted into the surroundings and stirred up their appetites.

"Hm? What's wrong Freon? Here, it's cold in the mountains in autumn, drink some to warm up."

A feature of the item box was that the flow of time was stopped for whatever was stored inside. The vegetable soup in the cup he presented was hot and steaming.

Freon received the cup and spoon with a wry smile.

Like that, she scooped up a spoonful of vegetables and brought it to her mouth.

"Ahh.....delicious."

"Mm. I wish I had liquor to go with this, but this is quite good. Especially the

sweetness of the vegetables and the salted bacon....."

With a smile on his bearded face, Brazos also tasted the delicious soup, bringing the vegetables and bacon to his mouth.

"Even so, when I think about how convenient Rei's item box is, after this request, would you like to form a party with me and Brazos?"

"Once you get used to convenient things, it's said that it's hard to go back to what you used to have."

"Well, I have no problem working together occasionally like this. I can lend a hand if you ever have some difficulty with a request."

".....That means, you don't plan to join Crushing Warriors?"

At Rei's words, Brazos stopped his hand that he was using to drink the vegetable soup, and turned to Rei.

Seeing that, Rei also stopped drinking his vegetable soup and gave a small nod.

"Ah. I thought it in various ways, but going solo is still best for me.I don't think that I can't keep going without a party, but I would like to stay solo until then. In addition....."

Stroking Set's back, who was happily shoving his beak into a large serving of vegetable soup, Rei spoke up.

"Although I've said this a few times, even though I'm solo, I still have Set. Brazos, you also realise how strong he is."

"Mm. That is.....I guess."

Brazos nodded at Rei's words.

Even if it was just several hours, being able to sleep well while leaving the watch to someone else was very reassuring. One of the difficulties of working solo was that you couldn't take turns to sleep and keep watch like in a party. However, there was no such worries with Set around.On the contrary, he had better peace of mind leaving it to Set than if he formed a party with incompetent people.

In this Harpy subjugation request, Brazos had seen Rei and Set's capabilities and had no choice but to agree.

"I see. That's unfortunate. However, that's fine. If anything happens, tell us. It's sad that young people with skill like you are decreasing in number."

"Heh, you just want to have it easier when we take requests."

At Brazos' words, Freon retorted to his unreasonable hopes. Looking at the two of them, Rei brought the vegetable soup to his mouth again with a smile.

Chapter 134

"Hmm, it looks like it's more than we expected."

Brazos murmured unintentionally at the sight spread before him.

"I couldn't guess this would happen either."

Next to him, Freon spoke in amazement.

"Guru~?"

What's wrong? Set seemed to say. Set tilted his head and rubbed it against Rei.

Rei was also staring in amazement.

"No, although I had expected it.....not to this extent."

As Rei spoke, he could see the top of the mountain. The cave where the Harpies had nested was visible.

The cave itself had been burnt near the entrance by the many fireballs Rei had thrown and the smell was still drifting around after several hours.

However, that wasn't the issue. Before Rei's eyes was something that could only be expressed as a sea of blood.

Around the cave, there where corpses of monsters scattered everywhere in places where barely any plants grew. Almost all the corpses had been eaten, some monsters had become only bones in the several hours that Rei and the others had slept.

"It's only been a few hours.The Harpies' presence in the mountain must have disrupted the monster ecosystem a lot."

"In other words, did the monsters on this mountain work together to attack any surviving Harpies?"

Rei thought of that and asked Brazos, but Brazos shook his head.

"No. This wasn't an organised raid. I dare say it was the blood from the

Harpies we killed. The monsters on the mountain gathered here after smelling the scent of blood and ended up killing each other.....no, I think they ate up everything instead."

".....Considering that, it looks like no monsters around."

"That is certainly possible.....probably."

While replying to Freon's words, Brazos turned towards Set, who was rubbing his head against Rei.

"Brazos?"

"Maybe, but I think they noticed signs of Set approaching.You can tell by looking at the monsters which haven't been eaten up yet. Most of them are low rank monsters. Only the stronger ones would be more sensitive."

Rei and Freon looked towards the corpses of the monsters before them at Brazos' words.

What Rei saw confirmed what Brazos had said. The dead monsters before them were mostly low rank monsters such as Goblins, Soldier Ants and Fang Wolves. There were also Orcs and Lizardmen among them, but only a few.

It could be said that the winners of this fight were the relatively higher ranking monsters on the mountain.

"Anyway. If we leave these corpses as they are, some strange disease might spread. Even though we took this request to reopen the mine, if the miners got sick, they wouldn't be able to work.Rei, can you do it?"

"Should I burn them up?"

"Ah. We could strip some good material from the corpses of the remaining monsters.....but more than anything, even if monsters don't come near now because they can sense Set, I don't know when they'll change their mind. So I'll ask you do it before they change their mind."

Rei nodded at Brazos' words and thought about what magic would be effective for that.

Corpses were scattered everywhere around the wasteland before them, they weren't gathered in a single location. Because of that, he needed to a magic with a large area of effect.....making a rough estimation, he grasped the Death Scythe and took a step forward.

'Flames, use my magic power and burn the dead. Purify regrets with our flames. Regrets, bitterness, envy, hatred. Everything has no meaning before my magic power. Burn even the grudges between us. Therefore, use my magic power and return them to the afterlife.'

As Rei spoke the incantation, his expression changed at the sudden increased consumption of magic power. However, Rei ignored it and continued to pour magic power into the magic.

Before long, a blue, fist sized flame appeared at the handle of the Death Scythe.....

'Flames of Mourning.'

At the same time he invoked the magic, he stabbed the handle of the Death Scythe with the blue flame into the ground. The blue flame was dispersed as the handle of the Death Scythe hit the ground and turned into a blue carpet as it spread into the surroundings like water running down a slope. When the flames touched a corpse, it would burn up in a blink of an eye before spreading further. Eventually, after about 10 seconds, the wasteland outside the cave was covered in blue flames. But.....

"It's not hot?"

Freon murmured in astonishment. Yes, she couldn't feel any heat at all from the blue flames that were burning the monster corpses before her.

"Rei?"

Like Freon, Brazos saw that and turned to Rei to speak with him. However, when he turned around, he saw that Rei's face was covered in beads of perspiration.

"H-Hey. Rei!?"

Rei waved his hand at Freon, who was rushing over, to tell her it was okay and leaned against Set.

"Sorry, I only have aptitude for fire magic. Since this magic overlaps with holy magic, it consumed a much larger amount of my magic power."

As he watched the blue flames burning up the corpses on the wasteland, Rei

explained the magic he had used just now.

"The magic I used just now, it was a magic to cremate the bodies of monsters and people as mourning.Just remember that in the very end, it's only a mourning. In other words, it's a magic to prevent dead bodies from turning into undead. It doesn't have that effect on the monsters or people that are already undead.....I can't say that, but it probably wouldn't hurt them much. Well, if I was attacked by undead, I would just use fire magic, which I'm good at."

Rei watched the blue flames burn the corpses as he stroked Set's smooth fur.

After about 20 minutes, the monster corpses in the wasteland were all burnt up and Rei had restored most of his stamina.

".....I feel refreshed."

Freon spoke up while looking around. She couldn't imagine that the place had been littered with a large number of monster corpses just a while ago.

"We won't have to worry about diseases or undead. Now then, Rei. I think we should check inside the cave, what about you? If you're still tired, you can rest a bit longer here."

"No, I'll go with you."

"Guru~....."

Set gave an anxious cry and rubbed his head against Rei. Rei smiled as he stroked Set's head.

"You don't have to worry too much. I'm just a bit tired because I suddenly exhausted a large amount of magic power. Rather, Set, keep watch so no monsters attack here."

"Gururu~"

Although Set still gave an anxious cry, he still nodded.

Finally, after stroking Set's head one more time, Rei headed for the cave where the Harpies nested.

"It's cooler than expected.....rather, it's cold."

Freon muttered as they felt the cold air as soon as they entered the cave.

"Well, no matter how strong Rei's magic was, it still can't burn all night. The

hot air has already been blown away by the cold mountain air.Even so."

Muttering, Brazos touched the cave walls with an impressed voice.

The entrance to the cave was narrow, but it widened as they went further in. If they had gone into the cave to subjugate the Harpies, as expected, Rei and Brazos would have struggled to swing their weapons in the narrow passage.

However, the passageway wasn't the only thing reflected in Brazos eyes. No, he was looking more at the walls than the passageway.

"This is....."

"Brazos?"

Always laughing cheerfully, drinking and noisy. That was Brazos, the Dwarf that Rei knew. Rei couldn't help but ask after seeing his serious expression.

However, Freon put her hand on Rei's shoulder and shook her head as she spoke in exasperation.

"It's no use. When he ends up like that, he won't go back to normal for a while."

Unlike Rei, she had know Brazos for a long time and had seen Brazos in his current state several times.

"I've told you before right? Brazos had wanted to become a blacksmith, but he eventually didn't make it."

"Ahh, you did tell me that."

"The biggest reason was his lack of sense as a blacksmith. However, he was still a Dwarf who had aimed to become a blacksmith. As far as examining ores is concerned, the Humans blacksmiths around here can't even reach his feet. No, that's not a good analogy, but either way, his eyes have a remarkable ability."

".....Ore?"

At those words, Rei turned to Brazos again. Indeed, as if to check something, the Dwarf was lightly tapping the cave walls and stones that had fallen to the ground with his Earthshaker Hammer.

"That is? Does this cave have metal deposits or something?"

"I guess. In addition, I think it's quite valuable based on Brazos' reactions."

Rei and Freon watched Brazos for about 5 minutes. After waiting for that long, Freon gave a sigh and turned to Rei.

"If we stay with Brazos like this, we'll probably stay overnight on the mountain tonight as well. It can't be helped, we'll look further inside."

"No, but can we leave Brazos alone like this?"

"I'm a little worried.....any how, we have a Griffon, Set, to watch him. I'll head further in with you. There shouldn't be any monsters that would attack us..... even if there is, if it attacks, that idiot will realise it. Hey, let's just go."

Freon pulled Rei's arm, which was wrapped in the Dragon Robe, and went further into the cave.

Then, as they went further in, frowning slightly at the burnt smell, they eventually reached a large space.

"Here is....."

The large space was even wider than Bolton's mansion, which he had visited a few days ago. Many stalactites hung down from the ceiling like icicles.

(Stalactites? Water passing from the summit of mountains goes through limestone caves, dissolving the limestone and forming stalactites like this. I saw it in a special feature of a TV show before.....but why are they in a cave at the summit?)

Rei thought about it for a moment, but then again, this was a fantasy world with magic and monsters. He decided that caves where stalactites grew in caves on mountain summits were probably not that strange.

"Here, it seems to be the Harpy nest."

As Rei was staring at the stalactites, Freon's voice brought him back to reality.

When he looked towards Freon, Rei saw a honeycomb like structure with many opened holes.

"This is.....?"

"Well. I don't know why it's like that, but there's no doubt since there are burnt corpses of Harpies here."

It was true that near the wall where the honey comb structure was, there

were a large number of bodies burnt to charcoal on the ground that seemed to be Harpies.

And with the place where the honeycomb structure was as the center, there was a hole continuing to the outside, opposite the direction Rei had entered from.

"I see, maybe this was the main entry for the Harpies? So, the way we came in was the back door.No wonder more than 20 survived after my magic attack."

Freon sighed, followed by Rei as well. What remained in this space that could be called a large hall were the corpses of the Harpies that had been here. There were no signs of surviving Harpies. Even if they were lucky enough to survive Rei's magic, the exit was close enough that they would have escaped from here already. Freon probably guessed that as well. After briefly looking around and confirming that there were no surviving Harpies, she looked relieved and gave a refreshed smile.

"Okay, we've completed our request for now. Although we left it all to you this time....."

Giving a wry smile as he was vigorously clapped on the back, Rei turned to look at the honeycomb structures in the wall.

"So, the Harpy subjugation is finished, but why is it like that? Is this really a nest the Harpies made?"

"I wonder. At the very least, I've never heard that Harpies would make a nest like this. Maybe, they found this by chance and thought that it was just right for their nests?"

Freon and Rei discussed it, but they soon heard footsteps approaching noisily and they turned to look around.

Then, they saw Brazos running towards them with a huge, pale red ore, his face flushed with excitement.

Chapter 135

"It's amazing! This is amazing! No, if anything, Rei is amazing!"

It wasn't his usual cheerful excitement like when he was drunk. As Brazos showed Rei and Freon the ore he had found, his face had a sort of obsession on it. What he held in his hands was a shiny, pale red ore. If Rei could sense magic power, he would have noticed that fire magic power. However, Rei was poor in this aspect and looked at Freon questioningly.

"This is?"

"Flame Crystal, it's Flame Crystal!"

Flame Crystal. Hearing that name, Rei remembered what Brazos had told him in the guild.

There was a mine in this mountain. Flame Crystal was one of the magical metals that could be mined in the mine.

"What's special about that? Can't you mine it in this mountain? In that case, it's not strange that you could find some even in this cave."

"Wrong! No, you're not wrong but funda.....ment...ally.....?"

As he held up the Flame Crystal in his hands, Brazos mouth stopped moving as he was about to continue speaking. What he saw was the place where the honeycomb structure in the wall was and the place where stalactites grew from the ceiling

".....I-Impossible. Why are there Windstone Crystals here.....in addition, so much. Adding onto that, Emerest Crystals.....is it?"

Rei and Freon gave puzzled looks as they had no idea what Brazo was on about.

Still, judging from Brazos' muttering that it was some sort of crystal, he searched Zepairu's memories for the first time in a while.

(Windstone Crystals. Crystals produced in places where wind blows all year

round for several hundred years. Under the influence of magic power, the wind starts to materialise, melting and growing down from the ceiling like stalactites. It is a material used to make magic items such as weapons and armour. It is also a very useful material in alchemy.I see. It's a valuable item.)

Thinking to himself, he looked at the stalactites hanging from the ceiling..... no, the Windstone Crystals. If they took hundreds of years to form, it was certainly a very rare item.

Next, he turned to look at the honeycomb structure that the Harpies had used as a nest.

(Emerest Crystal. It is a rare crystal that can absorb the natural magic power around it and give it to anything that touches it.Wow. This is definitely amazing. Does that mean you can increase the recovery rate of magic power just by wearing it on your body? There was a good reason why the Harpies made their nest here.

"Indeed, Emerest ore and Windstone crystals. I have heard about this from my master, but it's the first time I've ever seen it."

At Rei impressed murmurs, Freon looked at him.

"Did you know?"

"It was just something I heard."

Nodding at Freon's question, he explained it from the knowledge in Zepairu's memory.

After Freon heard the explanations, she looked towards the two crystals in admiration.

Dancing around with joy.....although she wouldn't go that far, Rei had thought she would be more excited and asked.

"I thought you would be more delighted."

"No, I certainly think it's amazing.....but it's not really ours."

"Huh? Why not?"

At Freon's casual words, Rei asked back in surprise. On the other hand, Freon nodded naturally.

"That's right. Doesn't this mountain belong to Margrave Rowlocks? That includes the mine that is the reason we came here for the Harpy subjugation..... Trying to grab valuable treasures from a mountain that belongs to the Margrave. What would happen if that becomes known? Margrave Rowlock's territory is already literally the frontier. If you did something here for your own self interest, in the end, the Margrave is a true noble.....no, rather, because he's a true noble, he will regulate such things strictly."

".....Is that so?"

"Ahh. At the very least, there's a mine in this mountain. If it was a mountain that no one had touched, it would be a different matter.Therefore! Brazos, don't even think about stealing that Flame Crystal in your hands!"

At Freon's voice, Brazos, who had been staring and the Windstone and Emerest Crystals admiringly, was startled.

(This guy, I hope he wasn't thinking of doing that.)

Rei turned to look at the Flame Crystal that Brazos was holding protectively.

"What, I wouldn't think of doing such a thing! There's more than that. This Flame Crystal is amazing. I tried to investigate the ores in the surrounding, but this Flame Crystal was probably just created yesterday."

"Yesterday?"

Hearing those words, Freon looked at Rei.

That was a matter of course. Flame Crystals were crystals that contained fire magic power. These crystals were created yesterday. Only one thing came up in her mind.

Seeing Freon looking at him, Rei asked.

"That means.....you mean that the Flame Crystal was created by my magic yesterday?"

Don't keep us guessing. Rei asked while thinking like that. Brazos nodded naturally.

"It couldn't be anything else. I think it's not so much about your magic power but more that your magic was an extraordinary fire magic. By chance, some of it must have been absorbed by some rocks, creating Flame Crystal."

".....In other words, if you have Rei, you can make Flame Crystal without limit?"

At Freon's question, Rei felt doubtful. Brazos shook his head.

"As I said, this Flame Crystal was definitely created by Rei's magic. However, it was only one of the factors. Several coincidental factors had to stack up."

"In that case, even if I use the same magic as I did last night, I might not be able to create Flame Crystal?"

"Probably. However, anyone with even a little bit of knowledge about magical metals, will know that this Flame Crystal was created very recently. In that case, the cause will definitely be traced back to this Harpy subjugation.....among us, only Rei can use magic, the guild will find out if they examine it.Well, this is troubling."

(In other words, it would be possible that I would be caught just to produce Flame Crystals endlessly. In that case.....)

"Before a strange disturbance occurs, it might be better to meet with Margrave Rowlocks to explain."

"No, that is a good plan.....but do you have a contact? You know you can't just meet with the Margrave because you want to see him right?"

Brazos sighed as he stroked his beard.

However, Rei nodded at Brazos with a smile. Since the Margrave had given him a nominated request for the dungeon, he was tentatively an acquaintance.

"That is true. Any how, we should get back to the city of Gimuru and talk to the Margrave as soon as possible.About stripping materials from the Harpies....."

"They won't rot if they're in your item box right? It would be better to deal with this problem first."

"Is that okay?"

"What, it's not just for you. Although, it's true that your magic is what cause the Flame Crystal to be created, we would still get rolled up in the trouble as it was a request we took together."

Brazos also nodded at Freon's words.

"That's right. If they were going to rot, it would have been better to strip the

materials first, but now it would be better to deal with this issue first. If one of those greedy people find out about the Flame Crystal, it would be enough reason for them to want to control you since you could create Flame Crystal as you want."

Stupid people filled with greed. At that description, Bolton's face appeared in Rei's mind.

(But, I did threaten him. I don't think he would be that stupid.....but.)

After threatening him, if Bolton still messed with him, he would be fine with that. He had only left him after saying that there would be no next time, if he did anything, he would be betting his own life. With that in mind, Rei reached out for the Flame Crystal in Brazos' hands.

"Even if I can meet Margrave Rowlocks, some evidence will still be necessary. Should we take this along?"

"Mm?Well. I guess it can't be helped."

Brazos handed over the shiny Flame Crystal with a reluctant appearance as Rei stored it into the Misty Ring.

"In that case, we should head down the mountain quickly.No, should I go ahead with Set?"

Rei spoke as he looked towards the exit near the Emerest Crystals.

However, Freon shook her head.

"Although every minute and second counts, you don't have to hurry to that point. For now, we are the only ones that know about this cave. In that case, it would be better to go down together since it would take time to fight off monster attacks if we went down without Set. Anyway, if we leave now, we will still arrive back at Gimuru by early evening."

"That's right, it would be great if you could stick with us.Or, Set could carry all three of us....."

At Brazos' question, Rei shook his head as he had expected it.

"No, Set can carry around one person without a problem, but at best, he can only carry two smaller people."

As he said that, he looked towards Brazos and Freon.

Brazos was out of the question. He was muscular, as peculiar to the Dwarves, and had a huge magic hammer, the Earthshaker Hammer.

Although the Death Scythe was overwhelmingly heavier than most other weapons, maybe because they both came from the Magic Beast Art.....though it wasn't possible to completely ignore it, Set still seemed to receive some of the weight reduction effect and didn't look like he found it too heavy.

As far as Freon was concerned, she was a bit taller than Rei, 170cm, and had a lot of muscle as well. Including parts of the armour she wore that was reinforced with metal, she weighed a reasonable amount.

Looking at the two of them.....Rei shook his head.

"That's impossible."

"Ignoring me, not even Freon?Ahh, you've gained weight!"

Before he could make it to the end, Brazos gave a cry in pain as Freon swung her sword and hit him.

Fortunately, her sword was still in her sheath. If she had unsheathed it, Brazos' body would have been bisected by now. That was how hard she had hit him.

"Damn, guh.....w-what are you doing all of a sudden.....well....."

Brazos turned around angrily. However, seeing Freon with an even angrier expression, Brazos' anger disappeared immediately.

"Brazos. You have great guts to tell a woman about their weight. No, you are truly a brave Dwarf. Accepting the anger of all women around the world, only you would have such courage."

"N-No. I didn't mean it that way....."

Brazos kept glancing at Rei for help, but seeing Freon sweep an angry look past him, he passed up Brazos' request for help.

".....Should we get going?"

Completing Brazos' punishment, Rei asked Freon, who had calmed back down to some extent.

Still, he still asked cautiously because Freon seemed to still be angry over Brazos' words about her weight.

".....Ahh, that's right. This much punishment it good enough enough. The rest will come after this matter is over. Slowly and thoroughly. I will engrave the meaning of tactfulness into him."

(There's still more?)

He gave a sympathetic look towards Brazos, who was looking pitiful. Still, he understood that it would happen to him as well if he got involved. The three of them finally left the cave.

"Gururu~?"

Set had been looking out for monsters outside the cave and gave a happy cry when he saw the three of them come out.

"There seems to to be nothing wrong."

As he stroked Set's head, Rei told the others to bring the mood away from Brazos' punishment.

It was obvious from the fact that there were no monster corpses outside that Set was somewhat bored.

"Set, the plan has changed a bit. We won't be stripping the materials from the Harpies yet. The first thing we have to do is to meet with Margrave Rowlocks in Gimuru."

"Guru~?"

When tilted his head in puzzlement, Rei told him about the Flame Crystal that was found inside the cave and how it was created by Rei's magic last night.

"So, as things are, troublesome things might happen if some greedy person finds out. Before that happens, we have to tell the Margrave that this was all a coincidence. Fortunately, Dwarves are familiar with ores."

Saying that, Rei looked towards Brazos, who looked like he was starting to recover.

Chapter 136

"I did think about it when we were climbing the mountain.....but it really is Set."

Freon said that as they walked along the highway. After walking down the mountain, they continued walking without stopping for breaks. The city of Gimuru was already in sight.

It was still around 3-4 in the afternoon and there shouldn't be any problems even if they asked for a meeting with the Margrave now.

After taking up the request and heading for the mountain, they had traveled while preserving their stamina in order to climb the mountain to attack the Harpies at night. However, Brazos' opinion was that they should return back to the city of Gimuru as quickly as possible this time. Because they traveled at the effective pace of a military forced march, the 10 hour journey was cut to 6-7 hours.

"Well then, should we go to the guild first after getting back to the city? Or the Margrave's residence?"

Rei asked Brazos, who was walking along side him on the highway.

At that question, Brazos thought for a little while before speaking.

"That's right. We should report to the Margrave first. If we report to the guild first, we might not be able to meet the Margrave if something unexpected comes up."

"I agree with that. We won't have anything to worry about if we report the request completion to the guild afterwards."

At their words, Rei had no particular objections and gave a small nod in agreement.

As they talked as they continued on, they soon arrived at the main gate to the city of Gimuru. After finishing the procedures with Ranga as usual, they entered the city.

"Well then, we'll be relying on you Rei since you are the one acquainted with the Margrave.....should we go?"

He nodded at Freon's words and walked along the path he had been through several times before towards the Margrave's residence.

On the way, they met several knights who were patrolling. But whether it was because Set had already become Rei's identifier or not, they reached the Margrave's residence without any particular issues.

As they came closer to the main gate, as expected, the two gatekeepers started to watch him. However, Rei didn't mind them as he approached.

Behind him, Freon and Brazos both looked somewhat uncomfortable.

Although he was a veteran adventurer, he was still rank C. If they were rank B or A adventurers, it wouldn't be strange for them to receive a nominated request from a lord or someone similar. However, the two of them had no such experience. No, rather, Rei who caught Daska's eye and received a nominated request from him when he was still rank D was the abnormal one.

While feeling puzzled at why they looked uncomfortable, Rei called out to one of the gatekeepers.

"I'm Rei, a D rank adventurer. There's something I need to consult with Margrave Rowlocks urgently. I would like to request a meeting."

".....I know about you. There is no way I wouldn't recognise that Griffon. However, to meet Daska-sama, the lord of this city, it will be difficult for me to say yes, you understand right?"

At the gatekeepers words, Freon and Brazos both gave a sigh.

They had some expectations for Rei's connection with Margrave Rowlocks, but it seems those expectations were just a false hope.

However, Rei ignored the two behind him and took out the Flame Crystal, that Brazos had mined in the cave, from the Misty Ring..

"Woah!"

Even for the gatekeeper, it was an unexpected event. Raising a voice of surprise, he took several steps back before speaking.

"This is....."

"As you can see, it's Flame Crystal. Just before, I went with these two other people to subjugate some Harpies that had built a nest.....have you heard about that?"

"Ah, ahh. That mine has made great contributions to the city of Gimuru. Of course I know about it."

He naturally knew about it as a person who served Margrave Rowlocks. The gatekeeper nodded. Rei smiled as the gatekeeper turned to look at the crystal.

"We found a huge amount of crystals in the Harpies' nesting place. This Flame Crystal also came from there. For that reason, I thought it would be best to report this as soon as possible....."

As expected, although a person came bringing items that directly related to the profit of the territory.....in the end, their job was to stop people from meeting with the Margrave whenever they wanted. The gatekeeper that was talking with Rei received the Flame Crystal from Rei and handed it over to his fellow gatekeeper before speaking again.

"I'm sorry, but can I report this to my captain first?"

"I understand."

Giving a small nod, one gatekeeper stayed behind to talk with Rei while the other entered the residence with the Flame Crystal.

"My apologies, please wait here until I get a reply. If it's such a serious matter, even our captain might not be able to decide lightly."

"Ah. Sorry for being so unreasonable."

Replying to the gatekeeper, Rei turned to look at Freon and Brazos, who were looking restless.

"Oi, what's wrong?"

"No, what are you doing? Do you understand, this is the Margrave's residence!? In other words, he's a noble!? How can you be so calm!"

Although Freon shouted quietly so that the gatekeeper couldn't hear her, Rei received it calmly.

Any how, he had grown up in a world where he never had to deal with

nobility, so even if he was dealing with a noble, he didn't have a sense of respect towards them.

And above all, he had become acquainted with Daska and Elena, who were both unlike most nobles. Kuust could be considered the typical noble while Elena was the daughter of Duke Kerebel, a central figure in the Nobles Faction. As for Ara, because she was so devoted to Elena, she didn't give off the impression of being a noble.

"I've been here several times before. It's because of that."

For the time being, Rei replied as such.

While continuing to talk with the gatekeeper and stroking Set, the other gatekeeper eventually came back from the residence.

"You all, it seems that Daska-sama will see you. Please come inside."

"Sorry for troubling you."

Saying thanks and giving a small bow, Rei entered the residence followed by Freon and Brazos, who both looked a little nervous.

As for Set, Rei asked one of the gatekeepers to take him to the stables.

".....Hey, Rei. Is this okay?"

Freon asked as she saw Set led away behind them. Rei nodded casually.

"Ahh, there won't be any problems. Set has come here with me before as well."

"If you say so then it's okay."

As they entered the residence, a butler, who looked to be in his fifties, was waiting for them.

"I will guide you to my master. Thank you for following."

Following the elegant butler, they eventually arrived at the office which Rei had visited several times.

Rei gave a wry laugh as he saw Freon and Brazos fascinated by the sculpted door that could be called a work of art.

The butler used the knocker next to the door as he smiled.

"Daska-sama, I've brought Rei-sama and his party."

"Ahh, that's good. Come in."

Hearing that, the butler opened the door. Rei entered the room and gave a bow towards Daska, who was looking at him as he sat at his desk.

"It's been a while Daska-sama."

"Ah, it's been a while.Even so, you haven't brought up a lot of disturbances recently. However, the disturbance this time is greatly welcomed."

Daska looked towards the Flame Crystal, that had been placed on the table for guests. with a grin.

While expressing complaints with this words, he had a pleasant expression.

It was no wonder. He was already in a good mood that the Harpies that had been stopping the mine from being used had been exterminated A huge Flame Crystal that he had never seen before had also been presented to him.

"Sit down and have some tea first."

"Yes, please excuse me."

The three of them sat down on the sofa for guests after being prompted by Daska. The butler that guided them here then entered the room, as if he had been waiting, and placed a cup of tea before Rei.

Saying a quick thanks, Rei brought the cup of tea to his mouth. Daska eventually spoke up after seeing that Brazos and Freon had settled down.

"So I heard that this Flame Crystal was found in the cave the Harpies were nesting in.....is this true?"

Rei turned towards Brazos at Daska's words. However, Brazos glanced away when he heard that.

Rei spoke up with a small sigh.

"It's slightly different. Due to the effect of the fire magic I used during our attack last night, it reacted with some of the crystals inside the cave to form Flame Crystals.....to be exact on what happened."

".....You?"

"Yes. However, this seems to be due to an extraordinary number of

coincidences to happen for this to occur. So, it would be difficult to create a similar Flame Crystal again.....or rather, it would be impossible."

"I see. If Flame Crystals could be reliably produced, the city of Gimuru would become a little richer. So, did you hear that explanation about the Flame Crystals from that Dwarf over there?"

Daska looked towards Brazos. Deciding that he couldn't avoid it any longer, Brazos placed his cup on his saucer and spoke up.

"Pardon me, but as a Dwarf, I'm not that good with talking with nobles. I will be grateful if you can overlook that."

"It's fine. I personally don't mind ignoring etiquette that much. It will do as long as you give the basic minimum courtesy."

Feeling better at Daska's words, Brazos started to explain calmly.

"That Flame Crystal, as soon as anyone familiar with crystals sees it, they will understand it hasn't been long since it was created. And this Flame Crystal was found in the Harpies' nest. Knowing that, it wouldn't be that hard to find out who had taken the Harpy subjugation request at the guild. Especially if it's Margrave Rowlocks, the lord of the city of Gimuru. Because of that, we thought it would be better to tell you directly instead of reporting to the guild first and having the information twisted by the time it reached Margrave-sama. Fortunately, Rei is acquainted with Margrave-sama."

".....I see. Did you think Rei might be taken advantage of because he made the Flame Crystals?"

"Yes. After all, this is the first time he has ever created Flame Crystals. Those who don't know anything will think that a second time is possible if a first time occurs. Fortunately, Margrave-sama understands the situation. I'm relieved."

At Brazos' words, Daska put his hands to his chin as he thought. Before long, he spoke again.

"Was it really a coincidence that this Flame Crystal was created?"

"Yes. I will affirm it as a Dwarf."

".....I understand. I will promise not to mention Rei anymore as far as this matter is concerned. So then, how much Flame Crystal was created in the cave?"

At Daska's question, Brazos replied after a few seconds.....no, after about ten seconds.

"Almost the entire entrance of the cave.....is."

".....What?"

"Rei threw his fire magic from the entrance to the cave. Almost everything there has turned into Flame Crystal. It's probably a considerable amount. In particular, alchemists and blacksmiths would go into a frenzy if they saw them. In addition....."

What came out was an unbelievable amount of Flame Crystal. While talking about its value, Brazos continued.

"In addition? Is there still something else?"

"Yes. At the back of the cave. There is a large quantity of Windstone Crystals hanging down like stalactites where the Harpies nested. There's also Emerest Crystals."

".....Is that confirmed?"

"Not just me, I've confirmed it with Rei and Freon as well so there's no mistake. That amount of magic metal, I cannot imagine how much it is worth. The Flame Crystals as well. Because of that, we came to visit Margrave-sama in a hurry."

".....I see. I understand completely. I will send someone familiar with that place to investigate the cave tomorrow along with a group of knights. This matter has not been disclosed to anyone else?"

The three of them, Rei, Brazos and Freon silently nodded at Daska.

"Yes, we have not told anyone else."

"I see.Thank you. As you know, Gimuru is a city at the frontier. This is a great development."

Saying that, the Margrave gave Rei a bow.

"I will manage this moving forward. If you don't want to get caught in any unnecessary disturbances, it would be best not to talk about it."

The three of them quietly nodded at Daska's words. Seeing that, Daska spoke again.

"Now then, is there anything else? If not, I will get some people to prepare to

head for the mine right away."

".....There's just a small matter, is that fine?"

Rei stopped Daska when he tried to wrap up the meeting.

Although Brazos and Freon looked at Rei, who had just interrupted a noble words, Rei continued speaking anyway.

"It has nothing to do with this case. Actually, I was recently told by a man named Bolton, the president of Azoth Firm, to hand over all my magic items and Set as well. Have you heard anything about that?"

".....No. I don't know about it at all. Is that true? No matter what the president of Azoth Firm says, he cannot forcibly take away magic items or tamed monsters from adventurers as they would be considered the property of the adventurer."

"Yes. I heard about that in the guild. I've also heard various bad rumors about him.Although I've refused him for now, there's the possibility he won't give up and will try to do something. In that case, there might be a huge uproar in the streets of Gimuru."

Daska frowned his eyes at Rei's words. Even Daska had heard about the bad rumors around Bolton. However, he couldn't remove Bolton carelessly due to the taxes he paid. Bolton was like a tumor and could lead Gimuru to its ruin if he didn't deal with it somehow.

"I understand. I will use my authority as the Margrave to tell Azoth Firm. If they continue to take aggressive actions without caring, you're free to act as you want. Fortunately, Bolton has a good younger brother. There's no need to worry about a successor."

Rei realised the implications of Daska's suggestion and his expression tightened as he nodded.

Chapter 137

By the time they finished reporting about the Harpies nest and left the Margrave's residence, the surroundings were already dyed red by the sunset.

Freon spoke up as she looked at the dazzling sunset.

"Well, that took more time than expected."

"What are you talking about? You threw all the explaining to me and Rei. You didn't say anything and just drank tea and ate sweets."

Brazos gave a sigh in amazement.

Next to him, Rei also looked at Freon in amazement when she said that.

Seeing the amazed looks from them, Freon scratched her cheeks in embarrassment.

"Even if you say that, I've never talked with nobles or anyone like that.....isn't it best to leave it to those who are familiar with it?"

"You can't just do that."

"I.....well, never mind, it's all because of this incident after all."

Feeling that she was at a disadvantage because of what they said, Freon averted her eyes as she changed the topic

"A-Anyway, Rei was responsible for creating the Flame Crystals and Brazos is the one that knows about the crystals right? As for me, I have nothing to do with it."

".....That's fine. For now, we've given our report. Should we report our request completion to the guild now?"

Brazos gave up as he spoke in resignation as Rei saw Set coming out from the back of the Margrave's residence.

"Gururu~"

Set gave a happy cry as he went towards them. Rei saw that Set had some sort of sauce stuck to his beak and stroked his head with a smile.

"It seems they've treated you well here too."

Guessing what Set had been up to, Rei turned to Brazos as he kept stroking Set's head.

"So then, we should report the guild.....but what about the Flame Crystal?"

Yes, there was still the Flame Crystal they had brought back from the Harpies' nest. Daska let them have this particular Flame Crystal as a reward for the report.

"Well.....for a Flame Crystal of this size, there's no buyer or seller right now. This time, why don't we bring it to the blacksmith who made the request?"

"I'm not troubled for money right now. If possible, we should leave the Flame Crystal as it is.....worst case, I'd be happy just to split it into three equal parts."

"Mm, what should we do with it. Rei isn't in need of money, Brazos and I aren't poor, but we don't have a lot of money to spare either.The Flame Crystal could be used to make new weapons, but I would like to sell it."

At Freon's troubled look, Rei spoke as he thought of something.

"To sell this Flame Crystal, you would find out how much it is worth after appraising it. How about I both your thirds?"

At Rei's proposal, Freon thought about it for a few seconds.....before nodding.

"I don't have any problems with that. How about you Brazos?"

"Hm, mmm.....it's certainly difficult to reject money, but the Flame Crystal....."

As Rei and Freon started walking back to the city from the Margrave's residence, Brazos held his head. By the time they had reached the city, Brazos still hadn't made his decision and Rei decided it couldn't continue like this.

"Then, how about we have the Flame Crystal appraised first? Depending on the price, you can decide what to do with your share Brazos."

"H-Hmm.....that's right. If we get an expert to appraise it, it could serve as a guideline."

"Would that weapons shop over there be okay?"

Rei was looking at a weapons shop about 10m in front of them. Funnily, it was the shop that had refused to sell him spears for this request.

"Mm? In that weapons shop? Weapons shops basically sell weapons, but it's the blacksmiths that forges the weapons you know? Of course there are many shops that make and sell their own weapons, so that's definitely possible....."

"You know. It would be better to get it appraised with the blacksmith we know. If it's a dodgy shop, we might be ripped off. But if it's an acquaintance, they won't do that."

"If you say that place is better, then that's fine. Is it okay to ask him to just appraise it and not to buy it?"

Because they were acquaintances, Rei asked if there would be an issue. However, Freon just shrugged her shoulders as Brazos smiled.

"He's a man serious about work. That's why he's been appreciated by a lot of people in the short period of time since he came to this city. He's not small minded about things like that."

".....A blacksmith who's only been here for a short time?"

Hearing those familiar words, Rei thought for several seconds.....

"Hey, the blacksmith wouldn't have a kid by any chance? One called Kumito."

Yes, a while before, he had helped a kid in a fighter against some older kids to kill time. The kid had told him his father was a blacksmith who had recently come to the city of Gimuru. Recalling that, he asked Freon and Brazos.

Their eyes grew wider at Rei's question.

"So you know him as well. Pamidor does have a kid called Kumito....."

"Ah, so it was him. No, I just happened to help that brat when he was tangled up with some older kids in a gang."

".....Boys your age are already forming gangs."

Rei gave a wry smile at Freon's murmurs.

"Well, it's not exactly like that. Kumito asked me to come see him when I could. In that case.....did you say he was called Pamidor? Are we going to that blacksmith?"

"Mm. He's a reliable blacksmith and will help us if we ask him."

"I have no objections. If we took it to a bad weapons shop to get it appraised, we would also have to pay an appraisal fee."

Like that, the three of them decided to head for Pamidor's smithy after reporting their request to the guild.

"That said, we should go to the guild first before it gets dark. Around this time, lots of people will start to report the completion of their requests."

".....Well, that can't be helped. We can't say that about others since we're the same. "

"I don't like crowds that much. Especially when they're adventurers since there are a lot of well built people."

Listening in to the conversation between Brazos and Freon, Rei unintentionally replied. Freon almost burst into laughter on reflex.

"Aha, t-that is certainly so. Because of Rei's height, he would be completely buried if he tries to squeeze in with the vanguards."

"Mm, nevertheless, you shouldn't worry about it so much Rei. Eh, Freon. Don't laugh at the physical characteristics of other people."

"B-But. With Rei's skill and strength, to have a height complex.....i-it's no use. It doesn't fit him....."

".....Just saying, I'm still taller than Brazos."

"You, you can't boast about being taller than a Dwarf."

Brazos gave a sigh at Rei's words.

Rei looked at Brazos as they entered the bustling city streets.....

"Oh, isn't that Set? He's looking cute today. Here, have some freshly cooked skewers. The sauce is also a new flavour."

"If you're a little hungry, how about some bread before dinner. There's plenty of meat inside."

"Rei, I tried making the changes you told me before, would you like to try some soup?"

As soon as they entered the streets, the storekeepers at the street stalls started to call out to Rei and Set.

"Gurururu~"

Set gave a happy cry as he ate the soup and snacks, served by the the storekeepers in the street stores, in several bites.

Seeing Set act as usual, Rei paid for the food as he smiled, thinking it can't be helped.Naturally he bought his own portion as well.

"Wow, this is an amazing commotion."

".....This is unexpected indeed."

Freon and Brazos were stunned as they chased after Rei and Set, who were buying skewers here and there. As they continued walking like that, by the time the guild came into sight, both Rei and Set were satisfied. They threw the paper that had wrapped the skewers and bread into garbage bins, which had been set up by the stalls.

"It's the first time I've become hungry just walking through."

"If I had some liquor I would be fine."

Saying that, they split from Set and entered the guild.....

"I knew it."

Rei sighed involuntarily. Near the evening, adventurers who had completed their requests would report at the guild. The bar was overflowing with people celebrating and feasting.

In such circumstances, they headed for the counters with Brazos leading them.

Not sure what they were thinking, but some drunks also tried to approach Freon as they moved forward. The result was, without exception, Freon smacking her sword in their faces.Fortunately, the sword was still sheathed.

"Ah, Rei-san, Brazos-san and Freon-san, you've returned. It looks like you've successfully completed the request."

Lenora saw Rei and greeted the three of them with a smile.

Smiling while dealing with this crowd of adventurers, it could be said that was the standard greeting of the receptionists to the adventurers who were reporting the completion of their requests.

"It was the Harpy subjugation wasn't it."

After saying that, she continued in a low voice so that other people couldn't hear her.

"Actually, it seems that Margrave-sama has contacted the higher ups in the guild. Originally, this request would only be completed 10 days after the subjugation to confirm that all the monsters had been subjugated. Only after that would it be considered completed.....this time, with the authority of the Margrave, the completion of this request is approved immediately as an exception.Did you do something again?"

Lenora looked at Rei in exasperation and Rei averted his eyes.

He couldn't tell her that because of the influence of his magic, he had turned the entrance of the cave to the Harpies' nest into Flame Crystals. There was also the rare Windstone Crystals and Emerest Crystals. There was no way he could speak to her about those things.

"....."

Lenora looked at Rei for a while as he avoided her gaze before she shook her head with a sigh as it couldn't be helped.

.....However, the reason was because Kenny, her catkin colleague, was looking at them enviously.

"Um, do you have any proofs of subjugation from the Harpies or magic stones?"

"Not right now. We came back to Gimuru in a hurry, so the Harpy corpses are still in Rei's item box."

"Is that so. We can buy them at any time. Then, this is your reward."

Saying that, Lenora handed over a bag containing three gold coins. Brazos received and the Harpy subjugation request was completed.

"Oh, and Rei-san. There were several adventurers who wanted to accept the request to strip materials.....when do you want to do the interview? I've told them to gather tomorrow."

"I see. Well then.....I'll interview them tomorrow afternoon. May I use the meeting room on the second floor?"

"Yes, there's no problems. I will let the applicants know. However, since they are adventurers, remember that it might not be possible for all of them to come tomorrow. In that case, it's usually first come, first serve."

"Ahh, that's fine."

"Well then, we'll leave it at that. I'll wait for you tomorrow afternoon."

(Well then, aside from the matter of the Flame Crystal, its finally the request for stripping materials. I'm looking forward to this, and feeling a bit nervous.....I wonder what kind of adventurers will come.

As he thought to himself, they finished their business at the counter and moved away from it.

Kenny watched Rei leave Lenora regretfully. As expected, there was no way to seduce Rei and invite him out for dinner at this busy time. It already stretched her out to deal with the adventurers coming in one after the other.

"Mm.....hey, Rei, Freon. Could we just stop by for a minute?"

Brazos was looking towards the bar inside the guild as they left the counter.

Unlike the times when Rei usually went to the guild, when the bar was mostly empty, it was now filled with almost no place to sit. Naturally, adventurers who had successfully completed their requests were drinking at the bar along with everyone else. There were also some who were drinking after failing their requests.Brazos looked at them enviously.

However, Freon brushed aside his hopes.

"Don't be stupid. We're going to Pamidor now. Pamidor will close his smithy if you drink now."

"No, I wasn't going to to my heart's content. However, we completed the Harpy subjugation request. Just one or two cups....."

"In your case, you never just stop at one or two cups! Hey, we leave now!"

"Ow! Hey, Freon. Stop pulling my ears!"

Rei watched the two of them leave the guild like that in amazement before following after them.

"Hey, Brazos. I'll enjoy the liquor on behalf of you."

As they left a man who seemed to be an acquaintance of Brazos shouted to him.

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"Guh.....ahhhh. Damn it, just showing off that they can drink right now..... those guys. Those drunkards are a disgrace."

Even as they left the guild and headed for Pamidor's smithy, Brazos was still complaining. Rei and Freon looked at him in exasperation while Set walked behind them in a good mood.

The reason why Set was in a good mood was simple. Because the number of adventurers who went to the guild in the evening was higher, the number of adventurers that came through was also higher. In other words, the number of adventurers who fed Set increased accordingly.....as a result, Set was able to eat various things while waiting for Rei to come out.

Some adventurers who were advocates of tamed monster discrimination, believing that monsters on the street were a danger, tried to pull out their swords and attack Set.....however, they were all knocked to the ground with a sweep of Set's tail. They were also beaten up by the adventurers around Set who were feeding him and thrown out of the place.

.....In addition, the first person to attack the other adventurers was a female adventurer, the leader of a certain Scorching Wind.

Because of that, Set was in a good mood as he rubbed his head against Rei, who was walking in front.

"Mm? What's wrong?"

Rei spoke to Freon while stroking Set's head.

"So, Freon. Where is Pamidor's smithy? I only know that it's near the library."
"Ahh, it's not that hard to find. Look, it's over there."

Freon quickly looked towards a smithy on a side street one block away from the library on the main street. Although it was a small smithy, its location close to the main street wasn't bad.

At such a smithy, Brazos, who was still a little grumpy at not being able to drink, opened the door.

"Pamidor, are you there?"

"Ah? Coming in at this time. I'm closing shop soon!"

As soon as he opened the door and asked, a voice shouted back from the smithy. Hearing that shouting voice, Brazos and Freon entered the smithy without worrying about it.

As usual, Set lied down a short distance away from the smithy. Rei entered the smith, following after Brazos.

An intense heat was felt as they entered the smithy. The furnace itself was at the back of the smithy, but the heat could be felt from the entrance.

"I'm closing already. I'm finishing my work for the day."

Although he had been grumpy when Brazos had called out, Pamidor's expression relaxed slightly when he saw Brazos.

Pamidor looked to be in his thirties. He had enough muscle that he could be mistaken for a warrior. Together with his tall stature, it emphasized his presence. Also, he was bald, unnecessarily emphasizing his tough look further.

With Rei's sharp eyes, he had seen Pamidor relax a little.....that wasn't the case, it was just that the somewhat harsh atmosphere given off by the stern man softened slightly.

.....Nevertheless, his looks combined with his atmosphere gave off an oppressive feeling. There was the possibility that if someone encountered him late at night in an empty street, they would scream and run away without a doubt.

"Oh, it's you Brazos. And Freon.....who's that kid?"

"He's Rei. He helped us on the Harpy request. It would have been difficult for me and Brazos to fight Harpies since they can fly in the sky."

".....Rei?"

Hearing that name, Pamidor frowned slightly. However, he quickly shook his head and spoke with a serious expression.

"So, since you've come here, is the thing with the Harpies done? How about the mine?"

Pamidor caught both of Brazos' shoulders. Rather than a blacksmith, he looked more like a bandit.....rather, he looked like a bandit who had made a mountain his territory or a pirate who terrified the seas.

However, whether it was Brazos or Freon, because they were familiar with the man called Pamidor, the answered with a calm expression.

"There's no more problems with the Harpies. As far as the mine is concerned, it will probably be reopened in the near future."

".....Speaking like that, there must be something else. Did something happen?"

"Rather than saying it was there, it was created.....or maybe not. Rei, please."

Rei nodded at Brazos' words and took out the Flame Crystal from the Misty Ring. Pamidor saw the Flame Crystal and drew in a breath as he saw the magic metal. Despite seeing the item box, his eyes were only drawn to the Flame Crystal in Rei's hands.

"....."

They looked at each other for a minute or so. After staring intently.....no, observing, for a while, he spoke up.

"Flame Crystals, is it?"

"Mm. Because of this, we had to pay a visit to the Margrave's residence."

"The Margrave's residence?"

"That's right. Actually, this Flame Crystal.....Rei's fire magic caused some sort of reaction and created this thing in the cave where the Harpies were nesting."

".....I see. So, it hasn't been long since it was created."

While nodding at Brazos' words, Pamidor looked towards Rei.

He looked into Rei's eyes, looking into the depths of the person called Rei. But soon, he stopped looking at Rei like that and struck Rei's shoulder with a smile.

"Kid, you're not afraid to look at my terrifying gaze. Not bad."

".....Heh~. It's unusual for Pamidor to say something like that after meeting for the first time."

Pamidor smiled at Freon's words as she was watching.

"Actually, I heard about a person called Rei not long ago. Did you get caught up with my kid recently?"

"Ah, it's about Kumito."

"That's right. He told me about you from then. He can be a handful at times. He said you would stop by sometime and was looking forward to it. He had to leave for something earlier but he'll be back soon so please wait for him."

At those words, Rei gave a small nod.

"So, what did you all come here for in the end? You're most welcome here if you want to sell the Flame Crystal. Um, Rei, was it? Just put the Flame Crystal on the work bench over there."

"I understand."

Following his instruction, Rei placed the Flame Crystal on the work bench close by. Pamidor spoke as he looked at the Flame Crystal in admiration.

"So, is it okay to sell it to me?"

"No, we would like to appraise it first. If you were going to buy it, how much would you pay?"

"Hmm, that's right. Considering this Flame Crystal.....5 platinum coins.....no, 3 platinum coins and 5 gold coins."

Freon's eyes went round at the unexpected price while Brazos replied to Pamidor with a sigh.

"Isn't that a rip off? By my judgement it should be around 8 platinum coins."

"It definitely be worth that much when it was right after the Harpy problem came up.....but as you know now, the amount of pure iron available is dropping. While that has risen in price, magic metals like Flame Crystal have fallen in price instead. In addition....."

Pamidor was about to say something and turned to look at Rei for a moment. However, he quickly shook his head and went back to appraising the Flame Crystal.

Brazos had a strange expression on his face but quickly went back to the Flame Crystal as well.

"I have no complaints about the purity. I can feel that its fire magic power has soaked all the way into it.To create a Flame Crystal like this, did you use a very powerful fire magic?"

"Ahh, it was amazing. He made 10 fireballs that were hot enough that the surrounding temperature rose rapidly. He threw them all into the cave."

Freon remembered the scene as she spoke and Pamidor frowned his eyes unintentionally.

Blacksmiths used fire to make weapons and armour. In other words, he was also a specialist on fire. Pamidor was a blacksmith with a reputation among other smiths. He could understand how powerful Rei's magic was with that alone. Moreover.....

"You threw 10 fireballs that were that hot into the cave? If that's the case, when the fireballs chain exploded, there must have been nowhere for the heat to go.....ahh, I see. That was why this Flame Crystal was created."

Actually, there was a second exit to the cave, so the amount of heat Pamidor was imagining didn't all end up inside the cave. However, the amount of heat still exceeded Pamidor's expectations. Everything considered, it was only possible with the extraordinary amount of magic power that Rei released in his magic.

".....How about it, you really won't sell it to me?"

Pamidor spoke while looking at the Flame Crystal, but Brazos shook his head.

"To tell the truth, Rei wants this Flame Crystal, he said he would buy Freon and my shares."

"This Flame Crystal? From what I can see, you don't have the skills of a blacksmith.....why would you want this?"

With strength in his gaze, he stared at Rei, not permitting a superficial answer. Even though Pamidor looked at him like this, Rei didn't feel much pressure and spoke up.

"I just completed a big request a while ago, I don't have any money problems right now. In the future, there may be a time when I'll need a magic item. Because of that I really want to keep such materials while I still can."

"....."

Sill, Pamidor looked at Rei. However, he gave a sigh in amazement after a minute.

"Haa, a kid who can match gazes with me. Your spirit is quite good."

He could guess Rei's strength with a single look. He smiled and vigorously struck Rei's shoulder.

"However.....Rei, did you offend some important person?"

"What?"

Rei asked Pamidor, who changed the subject abruptly.

Rei had no clue, but that was because Pamidor hadn't finished.

"Actually, yesterday.....no, the day before yesterday. I got a weird message. It said an adventurer called Rei might come to my smithy to repair or buy weapons and told me not do business with him if he did. It also came with a threat that my business would disappear from Gimuru if I did."

A notice to weapons shops. Based on that alone, it was obvious who had issued the message. Rei could only think of one person who would do such an illogical thing. A few days ago, he had ordered Rei to hand over all his magic items. A power hungry elder who also ordered him to hand over Set.

"Bolton, is it."

"Come to think of it, you did talk about it at the Margrave's residence."

Freon frowned slightly as she spoke.

"Well, I've told the Margrave already. I thought I threatened Bolton enough.....really, I didn't think he would still end up trying such an underhanded move."

"Going for the weak point, it's the usual way the president of Azoth Firm, that cowardly man. Have you heard about the adventurers who had similar experiences after angering Bolton"

At Freon's words, Rei recalled the story Milein had told him.

"That reminds me, I heard the story from Milein of Scorching Wind."

"You, you know a lot of people. Well, anyway, that's the situation. Since you've

offended Bolton, I don't you'll be able to buy weapons from now on.....what will you do?"

".....Well, what would I do? To be honest, I'm not bothered by it too much."

"What?"

Not just Freon, Brazos and Pamidor also looked towards him. Rei explained as he took his Death Scythe from the Misty Ring.

"As you know, my main weapon is this Death Scythe"

".....This is....."

Seeing the Death Scythe for the first time, Pamidor was astonished at the degree of perfection of the magic item.

"Because this Death Scythe is maintained by my magic power, there's almost no need for maintenance. The only other weapons I use are throwing spears and knives to strip materials....."

Regarding those, he had quite a lot of them inside the Misty Ring.

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"So you mean you're thoroughly prepared, right?"

Rei wouldn't be in that much trouble even he couldn't buy weapons. Hearing Rei say that, Freon spoke in amazement.

However, Rei shook his head at Freon and Brazos.

"I didn't see this particular event coming."

Regarding throwing spears, they were the only things he still had in his item box from the bandit extermination during his rank up test. Regarding daggers, he had taken them from the Claws of the Hawk when he first came to Gimuru. Everything else were casual purchases from he walked around the city.

".....So, Pamidor. That's what Rei has said, but what will you do?"

"Brazos?"

As Brazos looked at Pamidor with a big grin, Rei looked at him questioningly.

However, Pamidor returned a smile similar to Brazos' without minding Rei.

Originally, their smiles would have looked like they were plotting some mischief. However with his tough looking face, Pamidor's smile looked more like a bandit who was about to hit a group of unaware merchants.

".....Pamidor. Your face right now looks like a bandit you know."

"Ahh? Hey, you. Freon, your sword was made by this master blacksmith with a bandit face!"

Although Pamidor looked intimidating, maybe Freon had already become accustomed to it. She shrugged her shoulders lightly and ignored him.

After glaring lightly at Freon, Pamidor looked to Rei again.

"Relax Rei. Don't worry about it. No matter how Bolton and his lot manage the weapon shops in Gimuru, we.....no, I am not one of his minions. I don't need to follow such silly orders."

Rei's eyes widened at his words.

"No, wait a moment. Although you aren't one of Bolton's subordinates, like I said, doesn't he manage the weapons market in Gimuru? If you go against someone like him, you won't be able to get away with it."

"Hmph, I just came to the city of Gimuru recently. Such things don't matter to me. As a blacksmith, I make what I want and sell stuff to people I like. It's because I wanted to do business like that that I came to this remote frontier city of Gimuru."

"Thank you, but if you do business with me, won't you be unable to sell your items to other weapon shops?"

"Hah, my customers aren't just other weapon shops, I have many customers who deal directly with me."

A stubborn craftsman, Rei gave a wry smile at Pamidor's self declared stance.

"You're stupid, you haven't been here long and you're already getting wrapped up in things here."

"Hah. Don't call me stupid. If I wanted to do business like this, I didn't have to go out of my way to such a remote place. It was because I thought that the armour and weapons I made would help the people at the frontier against the threat of monsters, I came to the city of Gimuru."

".....Haa, do whatever you want. You're such a whimsical person."

Though Rei said that with a sigh, Pamidor looked back as if saying to Rei 'You're the same'.

(Now then, regarding weapons, I don't have an issue anymore. Because Pamidor can do business with me, I don't need to rely on any other weapon shops. In that case, what will Bolton do.....should I go kill him after all? Although I let him go last time because I believed Galahat's words that he wouldn't let Bolton do anything, this happens immediately after. It's become too late to reach a peaceful compromise, but if I hurt Bolton again I might end up with a bounty on my head.....if I believe Daska's words, I don't need to worry about that, but I still can't take Bolton's financial power lightly.In that case, it would be best to contact Galahat again.)

While thinking of what to do, he turned towards Pamidor again.

"Can you show me the knife you use for stripping materials?"

"Mm? I don't mind.....I'll show you what I'm using right now. I'd like to see if I can repair it before having to buy a new one."

Hearing those words, Rei took out the iron knife that he used to strip materials from the Misty Ring. At the same time, he also took out the Mythril Knife that he always wore inside his Dragon Robe.

"H-Hey. This is....."

As expected, Pamidor realised the value of the Mythril Knife at first glance. He was stunned. Freon and Brazos were also shocked as this was the first time they had seen Rei's Mythril Knife. Their looks were completely focused on the Mythril Knife. They didn't even glance at the ordinary iron knife Rei had taken out at the same time.

"Stripping materials with a magic item. What kind of luxury is this."

"Mm. The Mythril used in this knife is of high purity. In fact, it is good enough to serve as the family heirloom of a noble family. Rei, where did you get this Mythril knife?"

At Brazos' words, Rei decided to stick with the setting he had made for himself.

"It was a parting gift from my master."

".....Just because he's sending his disciple away, to give an item box and a Mythril knife as a parting gift.....is he a big shot or just stupid. No, if he took in Rei as his disciple, he wouldn't be stupid, he must be an important person."

While listening to Pamidor's words of mild amazement, seeing that they were all staring at the Mythril Knife, he sheathed it and placed it back inside his Dragon Robe.

'Ohh.....'

Pamidor and Brazos both raised voices of disappointment, but Rei didn't mind them as he took out his iron knife.

"To be honest, I don't use the Mythril Knife that much. I basically strip materials using this iron knife, I only use the other one when I can't cut through materials with this blade. So this is the main one I use to strip materials."

".....Mmm."

While making a low hum, which by itself would have intimidated most people in the public, he received the iron knife from Rei and checked its condition.

"This is.....it has been used a fair bit. Despite that, it's in quite good condition. Did you maintain it by yourself?"

"Ah. Even though I say that, after stripping materials I just wipe it down with water and a cloth. I do sharpen it against a grinding stone at my inn at night though."

"No, that's good enough. Among the youngsters now, many of them think that these are disposable just because they're cheap. Especially those nobles in the capital who have the hobby of playing around as adventurers, that tendency is strong with them.....this is well maintained in comparison."

(Nobles acting as adventurers as a hobby? Well, considering a war is brewing, I guess they're still better than those who aren't brushing up their skills.)

Thinking to himself, he looked at the knife in Pamidor's hands.

"This knife is something I got when I came to the city of Gimuru. It's convenient and useful."

Be be precise, he had taken it from the Claws of the Hawk.....but it wasn't an appropriate time to clear that up.

"Mm, well, that's right. If we consider that you're an amateur in this regard, it's maintained quite well. Nevertheless, from a professional's perspective, like me, there's various parts that can be improved. For now, as an apology for my rough greeting, I'll sharpened it for you. Give me a moment."

Saying that, Pamidor went further back into the smithy. Seeing that, Rei was about to say something to Brazos when.....

"I'm home~!"

The door opened and a loud, cheerful voice echoed into the room.

"Ah, it's Rei onii-chan! I knew it right away when I saw Set outside! You came to visit like you said last time!"

When the owner of the voice saw Rei in the room, he ran towards Rei and

jumped forward to hug him.

"Uh!"

Rei stood where he was as Kumito, the clever looking 10 year old boy, hugged him.

"It's been a while. Have you been doing well?"

"Yes! Still, you came to late to play onii-chan! If you had come earlier, we would have had more time to play."

Rei gave a wry smile at Kumito's words and patted his head.

"Sorry, even though it doesn't look like it, I am an adventurer. I have a job. Hey, can't you see those two over there?"

Rei changed Kumito's posture and turned him towards Freon and Brazos. Kumito spoke after blanking out for a moment.

"Ah-! Freon onee-chan and Brazos oji-chan. Do you both have business with dad? I didn't know you knew Rei onii-chan!"

"Ah, you're energetic as always, I would love to split some of your energy with me."

"Although he calls you onee-chan, you act surprisingly old."

"Hmph, it's still better than being called oji-chan, Brazos."

"It's different from being called oba-chan.....no, I don't actually care that I'm called oji-chan."

Oba-chan. When Freon heard those words, she gave a big smile.However, that was the smile of a demon.

"Brazos. Did you say something just now? I thought I heard you say something strange just now.....would you like to correct it right now?"

"Yes, what did I say. Anyhow, I'm an oji-chan, I don't remember things that well."

As they argued with each other, the tension in the room started to grow.

Rei gave a sigh and tried to move Kumito away from the two of them.....

"Don't fight, it's not good to fight! Really, these two are always like this. Rei onii-chan, please say something."

However, Kumito stood between Freon and Brazos and turned to Rei.

"There's nothing to say. That's just their usual interaction, you don't need to worry about it."

"But aren't they fighting? I have to stop them."

"No, I wouldn't call this a fight. It's like something kittens would do. Haven't you seen Set rubbing his head against people?"

".....I don't know. I have never played with Set."

Kumito said that while pouting. His face showed his dissatisfaction that he hadn't played with Set before as if he had forgotten that he had been trying to stop Freon and Brazos.

In that situation, Freon and Brazos both gave a sigh as they spoke at the same time.

"Rei, we are not like kittens....."

"That's right. What we're doing is not like that at all."

Seeing the two of them match up their timing when they spoke, Kumito tilted his head as he looked at them curiously.

"But you're both in sync?"

'Guh.....'

"Hahaha. Are you guys trying to make me laugh? Oh, Kumito. You're back."

Pamidor was laughing as he came out from the back of the smithy, roughly stroking Kumito's head. At the same time, he threw the knife, which had been sheathed, back to Rei with his left hand.

"Here. I've repaired it a bit. Come back here if it gets dull."

Catching the knife Pamidor passed to him, Rei stored it into the Misty Ring with a small smile.

"Sorry about this and thanks. I will use it as soon as I get to stripping the materials from the Harpies."

"That's right. Tools are meant to be used. Tools aren't just there for decoration."

As Rei heard those words from Pamidor, he looked towards Brazos and Freon.

"Speaking of that, when should we strip the materials from the Harpies that we stored away on the mountain? They won't rot because they're in the item box, but it would still be best to strip the materials as soon as possible."

"Mm, that's right. However, it's already dark outside."

Brazos opened the door to the smithy to take a look outside.

When they had come to the smithy, it had already been sunset. While talking with Pamidor and after Pamidor had sharpened Rei's knife, the sky outside had already gone dark.

"How about tomorrow then?"

"Ahh, I have some business I need to attend to tomorrow afternoon."

Rei replied to Freon apologetically. However, at Rei's words, Freon and Brazos glanced at each other before saying that there was no problem with that.

"There's only about 10 Harpies, we can manage that in the morning. However, there's nowhere to do it. Because of the Harpy's figure, even if they are Harpies, if we don't take care and strip their materials in some random place, we would likely get reported to the Knights."

Freon gave a sigh. Harpies had the face and body similar to that of human women. There was a high chance that they would be misunderstood if they were seen stripping materials from such a monster.

"Then, outside the city.....would you like to strip the materials somewhere further away?"

"Well, that would be best. If we did it close to the city, there's a high possibility that merchants heading for the city will misunderstand and report us."

Just as Brazos said that, Rei was the first to notice something. Looking towards the door with sharp eyes, he took out the knife that he had placed into the Misty Ring earlier. Freon saw that and moved her hand to the sword at her waist. Brazos understood that his Earthshaker Hammer wasn't suitable for their current location and moved to guard Kumito.

Kumito looked around in confusion as Pamidor took up a small hammer in the workshop as his face took a ruthless expression.

"Kumito, go to the smithy for a moment."

"Eh? O-Okay!"

Following Pamidor's order, Kumito went further back in, glancing uneasily at his father for a moment.

And at that moment.....

"Rei-, are you here!?"

A man opened the door and jumped in. He was bleeding from several place around his body and had an arrow stuck in his left shoulder. It was Murt, Galahat's junior, who he treated like a younger brother.

Chapter 140

"Haa, haa, haa, haa....."

A man desperately ran through the city, which was now enveloped in darkness. He wore a set of leather armour, made from monster skin, so as to not obstruct his movements. He held an iron halberd in his hands. But contrary to his equipment, which made him look like an ordinary adventurer, the parts the leather armour didn't cover were full of wounds. Blood ran down his wounds. Originally, the wounds weren't that deep and wouldn't have been a problem if he had rested quietly in bed.....but because he had continued running through the city for so long, blood continued to flow out of his untreated wounds.

"Bolton that damn bastard! How far is he planning to go!?"

Galahat, a B rank adventurer, was someone he admired. Because he had been seriously injured, he had asked Murt to do something for him and Murt had followed his instructions. That is.....to protect Bolton, Galahat's half brother.

However, that 'Protection' led to Bolton's loss of authority regarding his own actions. Bolton realised that and sent a private soldier to attack him, leading to Murt running around the city in the late evening with injuries all over his body.

Although it was dark, he was still in the city of Gimuru. Even though it wasn't daytime, there were still people on the streets. However, Murt didn't ask passerby's for help and continued running towards his destination. Bolton's private army was chasing after him and there were quite a number of C rank adventurers around. However, the number of C rank adventurers around was just one factor. Galahat had told him to avoid making the issue public as much as possible. As a result, he kept running to the place he needed to go to without asking anyone for help.

He had heard the information from adventurers he was friends with. The place where person who had triggered all this uproar currently was.

Originally, he was acting to protect Bolton from that person and to seek help from that person would be contradictory. In fact, Galahat had told him to keep the matter away from Rei. However, even so.....

(In order to protect Galahat-san, there's no choice but to borrow his help!I'm sorry, Galahat-san. The situation that Galahat-san wanted least to happen might occur. But, if Galahat-san dies and that Bolton survives, I will absolutely refuse to accept that!)

As Murt ran down the street thinking that in his mind, he heard the sound of something cutting through the air and instantly sidestepped. The next moment, something pierced through Murt's previous location, burying itself into the ground.

"Damn, using bows in downtown.....is he insane!?"

He glanced at the arrow for just a moment before spat out those words bitterly before running again.

Several more arrows flew towards him, as if following him. But, thanks to his light leather armour, he managed to avoid most of them.Yes, most of them.

"Guh!"

Pulling out the arrow that had pierced his leather armour into his left shoulder would cost him valuable time, he spat on the ground before continuing to run.

If it was the main street, where there would be plenty of people even in the evening, the enemy wouldn't have used a bow and arrow. However, Murt was currently in the back streets, where pedestrians were rare even in the middle of the day. Although he had passed by a few people earlier, most of them left hurriedly after seeing the injured Murt, considering it to be a troublesome thing if they got involved. He didn't blame them. Even he would have taken a similar action if he had been in the same situation. However.....

"Damn, just a bit more....."

Murt kept moving towards his destination. Two people moved out of the darkness to block his path. One had a sword and the other an axe, Murt wondered how long they had waited for him.

"Shit, it was still okay until I got shot in my left shoulder!"

Cursing, he held his halberd in his right hand as he charged towards the two people ahead.

Even though his left shoulder had been shot by an arrow, he wasn't too worried. Holding the halberd in his right hand, he could still use his left hand to assist its movements. And.....

"Move you pieces of shit!"

As soon as he got within range, he made a large swing with his halberd. The advantage of a weapon made from the fusion of an axe and spear was its range. He used that advantage to make a big swing. In addition, Murt was currently in the back streets, which were a lot narrower than the main streets. There was no way to avoid an attack that took out the full width of the road.....

"Uwaa~!"

"Tch!"

The adventurer with the sword had his blade broken with the sweep of the halberd and forced the sword out of his hands. The halberd's power was weakened after that and the other adventurer managed to block it with his axe.

Halberd and axe. Sparks scattered into the night as the two of them collided.

"Haaaah-!"

However, Murt wasn't phased and pushed all his energy into the halberd before releasing his grip on it just as it collided with the axe.

"Gah~!"

"Guh~!"

The man with the axe gave a groan at that attack. He collided with the man with the sword and the two of them collapsed after smashing into each other. Murt glanced at the two of them for only an instant. He picked up the halberd after making sure both of them were knocked out and continued running.

Hyu~!

As Murt started to run, he heard the sound of something tearing through the air again.

"Damn it, these fellows hired by Bolton are quite persistent!"

Down the narrow streets, Murt made irregular movements so that the archer couldn't lock onto him.

Because it was night time and there were others close to Murt, the archer had held back for a while. But now he continued to shoot arrows without hesitation as the obstacles were now out of the way.

(Damn it, even though that guy isn't far.....as it is, I'll be taking my pursuers along with me.)

Thinking to himself in frustration, he suddenly thought of something.

(In the first place, if I consider his strength, these pursuers shouldn't be a problem. Rather, his strength would be a great help. In that case.....)

In a sense he was pushed to this situation by his pursuers, but considering his current situation, he couldn't think of any other way as he ran along the back streets. And he could finally see his destination.....

"That's enough!"

Just as he decided on what to do, three people jumped down from the roofs.

"Damn, is it thieves now!?"

"That's correct. The back streets are complex and intricate, perfect for escaping into.If it weren't for people like us."

They wielded daggers, a long sword and a short spear. From their lightly clothing and movements, Murt realised that they were all thieves.

There were few people who held the occupation of a thief. Yet, it seemed that Azoth Firm, which controlled the trading of weapons in the city, had three of them,

Seeing the smile on the thieves' faces, Murt would normally have had no way out.

.....Yes. Normally that would be the case.

The thieves had just one miscalculation. However, it was one extremely large miscalculation. It was.....

"Gururururu~"

While raising a cry, a monster emerged from the darkness. It was a monster with the upper body of an eagle and the lower body of a lion. It was a monster that originally wouldn't be seen inside a frontier city like Gimuru. It was.....

"A G-Griffon!?"

Among the thieves, the one with the daggers raised a shout as he threw one of his daggers. Yes, because of his panic on seeing something he thought was impossible, he threw a dagger on reflex.

Because he had thrown it on reflex, his skill from training shone through. The dagger with the black coloured blade cut through the night, it was a weapon that could be used to its greatest effect at night.

"Gururu~!"

However, that was only against other humans. For Set, an A rank monster, it was a laughable attack that he could deal with with a simple swipe of his claws.

"Tch, a Griffon!? That means that guy is nearby.....the adventurer called Rei. Everyone, be careful!"

Murt guessed he was the leader. At the voice of the thief with the long sword, the expression of the thief with the short spear tightened. The thief with the daggers also snapped out of his confusion at that voice and took out another dagger from his chest.

Another person appeared with the sound of footsteps on gravel. The person who appeared on the opposite side of the thieves, sandwiching Murt, had a quiver on their back and a bow in their hands. It was the archer who had been targeting Murt previously.

"Tch, have you caught him yet?"

Despite giving a sigh, Murt's eyes held no despair. This was because behind the thieves, the figure of a Griffon, Set, appeared. He growled at the thieves with hostility because they had attacked him. More importantly, Murt's target was the building right next to Set, the smithy of a blacksmith called Pamidor.

(The problem is.....that is, does that Griffon called Set treat me as an enemy.

It's only met me once, does it remember me? No, it should remember me for sure.It should probably remember me. I hope it remembers me.....)

Murt felt like giving up for a moment, but as he looked at Set, his feeling of defeat gradually disappeared.

Yes. Though he had nothing to base it of, he was sure he would be fine. That's why he believed.

Was it because he had been cornered, or was it because he believed he could survive past through this.....he didn't know. Nevertheless, with that belief, Murt took his first step.

1 step, 2 steps, 3 steps.....slowly, he sped up from a brisk walk to a fast sprint.

"Damn it, don't let him get away!"

Following the thief leader's words, a man behind Murt raised his bow and aimed.....

"Did you think I wouldn't consider you would do that?"

Murt realised he was being targeted at the sound of the bow string pulling back and changed his path to be in line with the thieves. As a result, if the arrow didn't hit Murt, it would go flying towards the thieves.

If he had been a top rank adventurer, such as A or B rank, he would have shot the arrow without hesitation. However, his skills weren't as good as an A or B rank adventurer. Rather, since he wasn't such a high rank adventurer, he had to consider the possibility that he would hit his own people unintentionally if he missed.

Right now, the highest ranked adventurer employed at Azoth Firm was Galahat. The only B rank adventurer they had and someone Murt looked up to as a brother.

(Even when I was fighting with other adventurers, he was afraid of hitting them and didn't shoot any arrows. This means.....)

With a grasp on the adventurer's mindset, Murt bet on his intuition and in this case, it went well. As expected, no arrow flew at him from behind.

The thief leader noticed that as well. He held his long sword towards Murt,

who was running towards him.....but the next moment, he was swept away without a sign.

"Guah!"

Gush~, there was a sound like raw meat hitting a wall. The thief leader let out a groan before falling unconscious. In a sense, that was fortunate for him. After all, his right arm, wrist and waist had been broken by the impact. If he had still been conscious, the suffering would have been like hell.

"Gururururu~"

Of course, being the strongest creature in the area, it was Set, the Griffon, who did it.

After smacking that man away, Set's cute and round eyes turned sharp, ready to fight.

(Okay, I just need to break through that gap!)

Murt ran towards Set, putting more strength into his legs to slip through the gap created after the man with the long sword had been smacked away.

Running through the spot where the man with the long sword used to be meant running right past Set.....but Murt had already made up his mind.

"Set, I'll leave it to you!"

He shouted out as he dashed past the bandits, passing by Set.....who remembered him, as expected. Set didn't make any moves towards Murt as he glared sharply at the bandit with the bow.

Murt gave a cheer in his mind.....and jumped right to his destination, the smithy.

"Rei, are you here!?"

And raised a shout.

Chapter 141

"Rei, are you here!?"

Looking at the man who had jumped inside with a shout, Rei thought for a moment, trying to recall.....before realising who was in front of him.

He had been wondering how to deal with Azoth Firm and Bolton just earlier. Murt was one of the adventurers who worked for them.

"Ahh, I'm here. What is with this disturbance?"

He was bleeding from several places around his body. An arrow was stuck in his back shoulder. Rei didn't think that Murt would have come through downtown peacefully and asked as he quickly threw a knife with his right hand.

"Uwaa~!"

A knife flew towards him. Murt gave a cry at the attack that flew faster than the arrows that had been shot at him. However, the knife Rei threw passed by Murt's face.....

"Guh!"

It pierced the right should of a man who was about to stab Murt in the back of the head, knocking him away.

"It seems we have a lot of noisy guests."

"Eh? Ah, Ahh. No....."

Understanding how close a call it was, Murt took a deep breath and went further into the smithy in a hurry.

"Seriously, I didn't think we would get caught up in troubles as soon as we came back from a request. Hey, kid. Come over here!"

Freon pulled Murt over and shoved a piece of cloth into his mouth.

"Mgah-!"

Murt gave a groan at the sudden action but Freon ignored him and forcibly

removed his leather armour, tearing off his clothes and reaching for the arrow in his left shoulder.

"It can't be helped, you can't leave that arrow in your shoulder. It might be a bit painful, but endure it.....!"

Murt could hardly speak with a cloth shoved in his mouth as she reached for the arrow stuck in his shoulder.....and pulled it out in one go!

"Guh, guah—!"

In response to that, Murt gave a muffled cry due to the cloth in his mouth as Freon looked at the arrow head in a familiar manner.

"Hmm, first of all, it's not a poisoned arrow. Should I say your luck was good or that the other party didn't really want to kill you. Well, this is good. Pamidor, this is a smithy, so there should be some potions around in case of injuries. Lend me a few."

".....Well, we have to ask this guy about the circumstances. It can't be helped.However, since you're borrowing it, you have to return it. These potions are expensive."

"Charge the kid, not me."

Tilting the bottle containing the potion, she looked at Murt, who was groaning in pain due to the arrow being pulled out roughly, and poured the liquid into the wound on his left shoulder.

"Kuh.....fuu~, fuu~,fuu~, fuu~....."

The pain from the wound was subsiding somewhat after pouring some of the potion into it, most of the pain coming from Freon forcibly pulling the arrow out, and his breathing gradually stabilised. Seeing the situation, Rei walked out the smithy and took a look around.

The first thing he saw was the figure of two thieves crumpled on the ground. The second one was the thief with the short spear, who had been smashed against a wall by Set's claws, falling unconscious.

The only person left was the man with the bow and arrow, who was far away from Set.....

"Come out, it's obvious where you're hiding."

Rei glanced towards the shadows near the smithy.

However, there was no indication that anyone would step out.

Rei waited for a while after he looked towards the shadows of the building. After waiting about 30 seconds and seeing no one come out, with a sigh, he went to the man who had fallen unconscious after Rei had stabbed him in the shoulder with a knife and the man who had been smashed against the wall.

"Sorry, if you must hold it against someone, hold it against your associates who abandoned you."

Speaking to the unconscious man, he pulled out the knife in his shoulder that had buried itself all the way to the hilt.

Even though he had fainted, the man probably still felt the pain as he convulsed.

Looking at the knife.....next, he turned to the long sword that the other man had held.

It was an ordinary cheap iron sword. Still, it probably was quite expensive due to the rising price in iron ore due to the issue of the Harpies. Rei picked it up without caring too much about it.....

"Fu~!"

Holding the handle of the sword, he threw it towards the shadow of the building.

Originally, unlike a spear, a sword was a weapon that had to be held. In other words, even if you threw it, it's center of gravity would cause it to rotate while flying in the air.....but in Rei's case, the sword blade flew in a straight line without rotating after he threw it.

"Tch!"

A man with a spear and a man with a cudgel appeared as one of them click his tongue. Because they lurked in the darkness of night, they had an emphasis on lightness. They weren't wearing metal armour but thick cloth that would dampen sounds. And just in case, all their clothes were also dyed black.

".....Heeh~, from your clothes, do you specialise in night combat? Something like Azoth Firm's assassination unit? Well, with your skill, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that."

Rei said that with a sneer to provoke them.....but as expected of the people hired by Azoth Firm, the both of them held their weapons as they looked for weaknesses around Rei.

"What's wrong? Your target is inside the smithy. And to get inside, you have to defeat me.Are you coming?"

Rei gestured towards them with a finger to provoke them but the other two just held their weapons without saying anything. And.....

"Retreat."

With a short sentence, the two of them slipped back into the shadows of the building and disappeared.

Perhaps they knew their way around the back streets. They faded into the darkness of the night without slowing down.

Until now, the man with bow hadn't been able to move due to Set glaring at him. The moment Set turned to look at Rei, he bolted away like a rabbit.

"Gururu~?"

Rei stroked Set's head as Set gave a cry, shaking his head to tell him nothing could be done.

(Well, they should tell Bolton that Murt has contacted me. He shouldn't make any stupid moves now. In addition.....)

His conversation with Daska at the Margrave's residence passed through his mind. This was a good opportunity, Daska wanted to remove Bolton, who was like a cancer to the city of Gimuru. It was a prompt decision. It could be said this judgment was a unique part of Daska's character due to his military background.

Of course, he did assume that if Bolton died, there wouldn't be too much disorder as there would be a successor to Azoth Firm. If there was some form of confusion or disorder in the city of Gimuru, adventurers would inevitably get

caught up in it, which would eventually involve the innocent inhabitants of the city.

Although it might have been okay for that to happen if it wasn't a frontier city, Gimuru was a frontier city. It was a place where the threat of monsters was always present.

"Well, that's isn't something for an adventurer like me to think about but for the nobles to deal with."

"Guru~?"

Gently stroking Set's head, he returned to the smithy.

Set watched Rei go back inside before lying down somewhere out of the way.

"What happened to our guests?"

After reentering the smithy, Rei shook his head at Freon's question.

"They felt the difference in strength and retreated without saying anything. They weren't that strong but they could tell the difference in strength between themselves and others."

"I see. So, in the end, we have to ask this guy for the details....."

He had run all the way here while wounded and with an arrow in his left shoulder. The arrow had been pulled out and a potion poured into the wound, the rest of his wounds had also been treated with the potion but he probably felt very tired now. He had fallen asleep as if fainting.

"Seems like it. What will you do? Do you want to wake him up?"

"Ahh.....that's right, what should I do."

Murt had been unable to stand against him during his meeting with Bolton and yet he had still come looking for Rei. He didn't understand the small details, but his relation to Bolton was quite clear. Normally, he would have woken him up to ask about the situation. But.....

Rei glanced towards the back of the smithy. Kumito had currently taken shelter near the forge. If he heard Murt's story hear, he would get Pamidor and Kumito involved without a doubt. Considering that, he couldn't hear out the circumstances from Murt so easily here.

Perhaps he felt Rei's inner conflict. Brazos lifted up the unconscious Murt with a small sigh.

Having the strength to lift up a big, unconscious person, as expected of the Dwarves, Rei felt some admiration.

"Now then. First of all, we would annoy Pamidor if we stayed so it would be better to hear the circumstances somewhere else."

"That's true.....wait a minute. There's no doubt I'm involved in this dispute, but you don't need to bother about it. Won't it become very troublesome for you?"

However, at Rei's words, Brazos shook his head as he held Murt and Freon shrugged her shoulders.

"It certainly doesn't concern us. However, I heard most of the background at the Margrave's residence and above all wouldn't it be bad to abandon a comrade who has gone through life and death experiences with us?"

"That's right. Of course there's also some self interest. For example, it's not so difficult for people to find out from the guild that we worked together for the Harpy subjugation request. Azoth Firm has closed off weapons trading with you, but they can easily find that we were in the same party even if it was only temporary."

Do you understand? Brazos looked at Rei as if asking him.

(I see. So there might be a possibility they will be taken as hostages.Well, considering the skills of the enemy, I don't feel these two are much behind them, but there still might be a chance. In that case, it would be safer to act together.)

"I understand. Then do you want to come with me?"

"Yes. Also....."

Brazos pointed to the Flame Crystal placed on the work bench.

"What would happen if Azoth Firm finds out about this.....you can guess."

".....Well then."

Rei gave a sigh as he touched the Flame Crystal and stored it into the Misty Ring.

Bolton was someone who had simply and unreasonably tried to obtain Set and Rei's magic items. If he found out Rei had produced Flame Crystals, he would probably go to whatever means to obtain this money tree.

"Sorry Pamidor. It's been quite noisy."

"Keh-, I don't mind. Come again after this mess is settled. I'll take care of your sword for you then."

Pamidor replied simply. Pamidor as a person wanted to help Brazos and Freon, as he was close to them, but he had to consider his family.

Glancing further back to where his forge was for a moment, he thought of his son, who had such a lovely face he couldn't imagine they were blood related. Back at home, he also had a wife who loved him. He couldn't drag the two of them into this mess involving the major powers in Gimuru.

(I feel sad. 5 years.....no, if it was 10 years ago, I would have rampaged along with those fellows.)

He gave a sigh in his mind, feeling irritated at himself for thinking of self protection first.

Maybe he noticed Pamidor's thoughts. Brazos shook his head with a smile as he carried Murt.

"Don't worry about it. Anyhow, you have to protect your family. It's natural that they should come first."

"Yes, yes, anyway, you have a wife that would marry such a tough looking guy as you. Women with such tastes are rare."

Freon also nodded in agreement with Brazos' words.

Pamidor must have realised what the two of them were trying to say. After looking apologetic for a moment, he immediately smiled.Unfortunately, his smile looked more like the heinous grin for a carnivore laughing at its prey.

However, Brazos and Freon were used to it, giving a calm smile and nod while Rei just nodded without saying anything in particular.

"Well then, we'll get going soon. We'll come back after this is all settled so we'll ask you to take care of our weapons then."

"Leave it to me. Hope you finish up your troublesome matters soon."

".....Say bye to Kumito for me."

"Tell him nee-chan says to be careful."

"Thank you for sharpening my knife."

"Oh, I'll clean it up for you at any time."

Like that, the three of them, and one unconscious person, left the smithy.

Chapter 142

When Rei left Pamidor's workshop. Set, who had been lying close by, immediately noticed them and gave a cry.

Rei looked around as he stroked Set, but the man he had stabbed in the right shoulder earlier and the thief that Set had knocked out had already disappeared.

"As expected, they didn't really abandon their associates."

Muttering to himself, for a moment, he admired the the people who had recovered their unconscious comrades. But then Rei thought about it.....

(No, they can only be consider Azoth Firm's tail, when they have to, they can cut it off at any time. However, we could get more information if they betrayed Azoth Firm. Considering the risks, it would be greater if they left them here.)

Concluding to himself, Rei brought himself back to reality and turned to Brazos.

"So, where do you want to hear the situation from Murt?"

"Hmm.....at an inn?"

"Then what about Set. Inns are almost all targeted towards adventurers so there aren't any stables for tamed monsters. As it will probably take a long time for everything to be said, it wouldn't be that good to leave Set outside for the entire time."

Hearing Brazos and Freon's words, there was only one place Rei could think of.

No, technically speaking, he could also go over to the Margrave's residence to hear out the situation. However, Rei dismissed it because if they brought Margrave Daska in now, Bolton might realise the crisis he was currently in and try to run away.

"Then how about we go to the Dusk Wheat? That's the inn I'm staying in and there is a stable for Set, so there are no problems there. It's famous as a high

class inn so Bolton probably won't be able to kick up as much of a fuss there."

The merchants who supported the city of Gimuru and their mercenary guards stayed there. If he ambushed Rei there, the reputation of Gimuru would drop. And because Azoth Firm also had weapon business deals with other cities, they would also suffer a loss.

At this time, in Rei's mind, Bolton would not make such a decision. Although he was an old man drowning in his own greed, from his position as the main weapons dealer in Gimuru, the loss in income would not be worth the benefits he would gain.

This was not wrong in a sense. But Rei's greatest miscalculation was that due to his own involvement, Bolton had become aware of the danger that his brother, Galahat, might take over his position.

In other words, even if he made a mess here and Gimuru's reputation dropped, he might be able to protect his own position. If asked which side Bolton would choose.....you didn't even need to think about it.

It was impossible for Rei to know what Galahat was thinking.....but it had eventually led to fights breaking out on the surface.

"I see, he certainly wouldn't be able to do much at the Dusk Wheat."

Freon and Brazos, who was carrying Murt, nodded in agreement.

"Gurururu~"

"Mm? Set, what's wrong?"

As Rei was about to head towards the Dusk Wheat, Set walked in front of them and knelt down. It was as if he was telling them to ride him.....

"No, it's different. That's right."

With Set looking backwards after crouching down, Rei realised what he was trying to say and turned towards Brazos.

"Brazos, he's saying he can carry Murt."

"Hm? Is that so? He isn't that heavy though....."

"If Set can carry Murt, why not just leave it to him?."

Looking at Murt on Brazos' shoulders, Rei then looked at Murt's halberd and

leather armour.

"Ah, leave those to me. They're quite unwieldy as they are right now."

"I see. That reminds me that Rei has an item box. The situation moved so fast that I had completely forgotten about it."

Rei took the halberd and leather armour with a look of understanding as he stored them into the Misty Ring.

".....It would be convenient if we could store him into the item box as well."

Freon said that as she watched Murt get placed on Set's back.

"As expected, it's impossible to store a living human. But if it's things like the corpses of Harpies, there's no problem if they're dead."

".....That's right, it's an item box. Dead bodies are items. In other words, it recognises things that are alive as not being items."

Freon nodded at Brazos' words, as he placed Murt onto Set's back.

After doing all that, the party began moving towards the Dusk Wheat, Rei's current accommodation.

"There is a possibility we will be attacked if we go through places with few people. We will take the main streets."

"Mm, I also understand Rei's thoughts.....well, there will definitely be more people that in the back streets."

Brazos' worry was that at night, there wouldn't be as many people on the streets. Of course it couldn't compare to the almost non-existent traffic in the back streets, but it still wasn't as much as in the day time. As there would be more people in the main streets, if they were attacked, there would be a lot more collateral damage.

Freon reject Brazos' worries with a snort.

"I also understand Brazos' worries, but they ran away from Rei and Set at once without being able to do anything. I don't think they have the guts to attack us."

"I'm worried about the off chance, idiot."

The careful Brazos and the aggressive Freon. Rei casually looked around as he

listened to the two of them.

".....Setting aside them attacking us, there is no doubt they will track us."

Yes, ever since he had left Pamidor's smithy, he had felt someone watching him. Although it was quite understandable that they were being watched, he was still confused about where they were watching him from. It was such a situation.

"I would say there is a chance they would try to attack Murt from behind or that the archer will try to shoot him."

"Gururu~"

At Rei's words, Set gave a cry as he looked at the surroundings. A roof on the street, the shadow of a building a bit further away behind them

Looking in those directions.....no, it was clear who they were. Even if they had the ability to conceal themselves from Rei, as expected, it was impossible to deceive a Griffon, an A rank monster.

"I see, those three aren't doing what I expected."

"Guru~?"

Do you want to fight them here? At Set's puzzled cry, Rei shook his head.

Although there were fewer people than in the daytime, there were still quite a lot. Moreover, there were a lot of drunks. What would happen if they started a fight here, Rei could imagine the results.

"Don't make a fuss. We'll rampage about later."

"Gururu~....."

Set nodded at Rei's words. Stroking Set's head, they walked through the streets as they felt the watching eyes on them. Eventually, the familiar Dusk Wheat Inn became visible.

"Hou~, here is....."

"It certainly is a big inn. It's at a level where we wouldn't be able to afford it."

"Is that so? It's not that expensive. But it saves Set a lot of trouble."

"Guru~"

Brazos and Freon cooperated to carry the unconscious Murt off Set's back.

"You can only say that because you have the money to afford it."

"No, although I certainly can afford it, the reason I chose this place is mostly due to unavoidable circumstances"

"Unavoidable Circumstances?"

"Ah. There was an issue over stables for Set, this was the only place that could accept him."

".....I see."

Freon was convinced. Accompanying them, Brazos' eyes shined as he smelled the scent of alcohol coming from the inn.

"Oh, Rei-san. Welcome back.....well, there's quite a few of you. And who is that person?"

Lana, the proprietress of the Dusk Wheat, greeted them. She then saw them carrying Murt and asked.

"He's an acquaintance, but he's a bit drunk. I plan to bring him to my room. More importantly is food....."

Saying that, he turned to look at the dining area. As expected it was full up. Most of the seats were filled with guests who were staying overnight or had come simply for the food, there was no place for Rei to sit.

Lana understood that as well. She bowed her plump face apologetically.

"Sorry, as you can see, right now is a bit....."

"I see, in that case, could you bring something up to my room? I'll also ask for some for the others."

"Wait a moment Rei! You ate so much before heading to the guild and you want to eat more!? I mean, how does it all fit into your stomach!?"

Towards Rei, who just calmly ordered a meal, Freon had a startled expression. He had eaten a lot of skewers, sandwiches and freshly baked bread from the stalls on the way to the guild and yet he could still eat.

But Rei nodded as if there was nothing wrong with that.

"To begin with, my energy efficiency is poor. Even if I eat a lot, I won't get fat."

".....You, you're turning all the women in the world into your enemy."

As Freon looked at Rei reproachfully, Rei ignored her and spoke to Lana again.

"Ah, I would also like a meal for Set."

"I understand. Please "

Hearing a voice call for her from the dining area, Lana gave a slight bow before heading over there.

Seeing her leave, they went up the stairs to Rei's room for now.....

"I would also be happy if you could bring some alcohol if possible."

From behind, Brazos' voice could be heard. Rei and Freon glanced at each other for a moment before pretending they hadn't heard anything.

"Rei's room is here.....what, there's almost nothing, hey."

Because Murt was being carried by the others, Freon opened the door instead, giving an unexpected cry as she looked inside Rei's room.

"There's a bed, desk and chairs."

As Rei had said, the room had all the items of an ordinary inn room. However, it still had[Nothing]to Freon.....

"Your personal items, your own property! Isn't it normal for people to keep their own things in their room!? Spare weapons, supplies, books, a change of clothes!"

Yes. As Freon had pointed out, there was nothing that could be considered personal items in Rei's room. But that was natural.

"Ah, about that. I keep them all in my item box so there are no problems there."

".....Oh, that's right. You have an item box. So you just keep everything in there."

Freon muttered that as Rei walked past to place Murt on the bed.

After that, they each sat down on the floor or on a chair before taking a deep breath.

"If you think about it, hurrying back from the mountain with the Harpies,

returning to Gimuru and going straight to the Margrave's residence. After that we went to the guild, then to Pamidor's smithy. Then this guy brought this uproar to us..... Somehow, I feel like a lot of things happened today."

"Hahaha. Well, it's no wonder that Freon is tired. Still, I feel the same."

"You have the same feeling as well?"

Freon asked at Brazos' words as they both sat on the floor.

"Mm. I feel that a lot of noisy things happened today, but you could say that it was just a fulfilling day. If you think about it like that, it's not that bad after all."

"Is that so."

As Freon gave a sigh, there was a knock on the door and Rei reflexively reached for his weapon.

"Who is it?"

In response to Rei's question, a person whom they had just talked to on the floor below a few minutes earlier replied.

"It's Lana, I've brought your meal."

"I see, sorry about this."

Rei opened the door, keeping his knife at his waist as a precaution. Lana was waiting outside with a large tray. Aside from the food on the tray, there was also a bottle of wine.

"Is this good enough?"

"Ahh, thank you very much. The price?"

"If you exclude Rei's portion, one silver coin is enough."

The price of the food was reasonable and not too high, considering the amount of food and wine for the other three. Judging that, he paid her a silver coin.

(However, I'll collect it back from Murt later.)

Thinking to himself, he saw Lana off.

".....Food....."

As the smell of cooked food began to drift into the room, Murt, who had been sleeping like a child, woke up and looked around the room as if waiting for that.

"Getting up at the smell of food.....no, well, sure it smells nice but really."

Freon looked at Murt in honest amazement as Rei walked over to him, agreeing in his heart as well.

Chapter 143

The smell of cooked food in the room stimulated the appetite of the unconscious Murt, who woke up at that. As he reached out for the bottle of wine, Brazos spoke in amazement.

"Even as went went through the city, there were a lot of other nice smells from the stores around."

"No, that's not the problem here."

Freon gave a sigh in exasperation as she saw Brazos pour a glass of wine for himself.

Next to Freon, Rei brought some of the food on the tray to Murt.

"Here, eat this for now to restore your strength. Even though your injuries have been cured with the potion, you'll need to recover your blood loss and stamina on your own."

"Ah? Ahh.....uh, Rei!? Ah, that's right. I was looking for you Rei, I heard where you were from an acquaintance....."

Murt, who was a little disoriented after waking up, gradually recalled what he had been doing before falling unconscious.

"You came into the workshop with injuries all over your body."

"-? That's right! Where are those guys who were chasing me!? I saw one of them get taken down by your tamed monster....."

"They ran away once they realised there was no chance of winning.It seems it will be better if I ask about the situation before you start eating. What happened?"

"That.....actually, it seems that even after you threatened him, Bolton couldn't give up on your magic items and Griffon. He was making various preparations in secret."

Murt said that as brought the cup of water that Rei gave him to his mouth.

Hearing Murt's words, Rei nodded as he passed over the tripe and bean stew.

"I thought so. I heard about it from the Pamidor, the blacksmith. It seems he has told the weapon shops not to do business with me. That includes blacksmiths that sell weapons on their own. If a blacksmith did business with me, weapons shops wouldn't accept weapons crafted by them either. Because of that, blacksmiths in the area would also avoid doing business with me."

Rei said that as if it wasn't his problem.

He didn't have any sad feelings or expression about not being able to trade at weapon shops. Rather, he brought a spoonful of the stew to his mouth, enjoying the taste of tripe and beans as if it was more important to him right now.

The tripe had a unique chewy texture. Not only that, it was cooked just right that tripe would break apart just as he bit into each piece. In addition, the beans cooked along with the fat had a delicious taste and he kept moving the spoon to his mouth without stopping, one after another.

"So, why were you looking for me?"

".....Galahat-san....."

Murt stopped as he was about to tell Rei before deciding that it would be best to come out with everything. Eventually he spoke up.

"Did Rei reject Bolton's offer and go on a rampage?"

"Ah."

At that blunt answer, Freon and Brazos looked at Rei with startled eyes.

Brazos, who had just drank some wine, almost spat it out in surprise and kept it in by clapping his hand over his mouth.

The two of them had heard at the Margrave's residence that Bolton had ordered Rei to hand over his magic items and Set, but they hadn't expected that he had gone on a rampage after refusing.

(No, it actually seems reasonable when you consider Rei's temperament.)

Brazos aside, who had choked on his wine and was coughing, Freon recovered from her temporary shock in understanding.

Nevertheless, against the president of Azoth Firm, who controlled the

weapons trade in Gimuru, they couldn't believe what he had done. Rather, even though they knew Rei, Freon could only accept it because Rei couldn't be understood by common sense.

".....Galahat-san suffered a serious injury from your attack but manage to escape death thanks to healing magic and potions."

"No, he pushed himself after taking my attack, so in a sense it's his own fault."

Like that, blue veins appeared on Murt's forehead and he tried to shout at Rei, who looked like he didn't really care, as he thought of how his respected senior had ended up. But after remembering he had to ask Rei for something, he calmed his anger down somehow.

"Well, moving on. After that.....after he regained consciousness, Galahat-san gave me some orders regarding Azoth Firm"

"Who is Galahat?"

After recovering from choking, Brazos asked as poured and drank another cup wine.

"He's an adventurer who came to bring me there when Bolton summoned me to Azoth Firm. The first time I went, I was driven away by the gatekeepers. The next day, Murt and Galahat came to bring me there. He seems to be a B rank adventurer, you don't know him?"

"He certainly is a veteran adventurer, but it's not like I remember all the high ranking adventurers."

"Even so, for someone hired by Azoth Firm, he has a very nice personality, he's even more famous for his looks."

At Rei's words, from the bed, Murt shook his head.

"Think about Bolton's character. Although he's only half related by blood, do you think he would let Galahat be praised and become famous?"

".....Ah, I understand. That's right. If the rumors I've heard about Bolton are even half true, then that could happen."

As she gave a sigh, Freon spoke in amazement, Rei understood her meaning and shrugged his eyes.

Seeing the two of them like that, Murt gave a sigh as well.

"Even if Galahat-san made some great achievements, Bolton would change the story so that his loyal subordinates would take the credit."

".....Does the guild permit such things?"

At Rei's natural question, Murt shook his head.

"Of course you normally wouldn't be able to get away with such things. But Galahat-san would never say anything about his own achievements. The guild would only make a move if there were complaints from the person in question."

"I see."

During his exchange with Bolton, Rei remembered Galahat standing in his way. Indeed, at that time, Galahat had desperately wanted to save Bolton's life, even at the cost of his own.

"Even the guild staff were aware of it, so disregarding his recorded achievements, they let him take the rank up test. Thanks to that, Galahat-san made it to rank B....."

"On the other hand, maybe he was allowed to do that so they could use his status as a rank B adventurer hired by Azoth Firm."

Rei muttered as he remembered his interaction when Galahat and Murt had come to escort him.

Murt gave a sigh at Rei's words and nodded.

"Ah. It seems that that touched on Bolton's sore spot as well. Although he's a rank B adventurer, he was forced to more trivial work than prominent requests. He was only used to show off the fact that Azoth Firm had a B rank adventurer."

Murt spat out bitterly. Disregarding that, Rei tilted his head in puzzlement.

"Even when I tried to kill Bolton, why did Galahat back Bolton that much.....or rather, why does he still provide one sided support? Even though Bolton hates him that much. It can't possibly be just because they're related by blood right?"

"....."

At Rei's question, Murt went quiet.

"....."

Seeing that, Rei, Freon and Brazos looked silently back at Murt.

The silence continued for several minutes. Eventually, Murt spoke.

"At that time, I think Rei also heard it.....Galahat and Bolton are only half related by blood. You know, the reason is because Bolton's father had laid his hands on Galahat's mother well after he had already become a grandfather. Even if he is the president of Azoth Firm and controls all the weapons business in Gimuru, status wise, he's pretty much a commoner and not a noble. Because Margrave Rowlocks rules this frontier city, nobles don't have an absolute privilege.....still, the viewpoints of nobles and commoners are different. As a noble, you would still have some respect even if you had a mistress aside from your real wife, but if a commoner did that, they would be looked upon coldly.Galahat-san's case was even worse, Bolton's father was in charge of Azoth Firm. All the side effects of his business went to Galahat-san's mother. At the same time, it was also directed towards Galahat-san, who was his son. Regarding Azoth Firm, it seems he still used the same old aggressive tactics back then. As a result, it should be easy to guess that all the resentment went towards Galahat-san right?"

The other three frowned at the terrible story, and Brazos eventually spoke.

"Then, Bolton's father knew that he wasn't a noble.....and yet he still took a mistress so shamelessly? From your story Galahat must have received a lot of terrible treatment."

"I guess. Azoth Firm is still to blame in the end. It's a business built on aggressive and unfair trading. As for the people on the receiving end each time, it seems that Galahat-san and her mother were suitable target for retribution. As a result, he ended up living like a fugitive ever since he was born. Bolton's father was also his father, and whether it just got too annoying or not, he finally paid their living expenses.....even so, he only paid enough for the parent and child to barely manage."

".....After experiencing all that, why would Galahat still obediently follow Bolton?"

"This, I heard this when Galahat-san got drunk.....when Galahat's mother fell ill, I don't know for what reason but Bolton seemed to have exerted some power and obtained some medicine."

At Murt's words, the other three were dumbfounded.

After a minute long silence, Rei spoke.

".....You're joking?"

Next to Rei, Brazos and Freon just nodded in agreement.

Towards the three of them, Murt gave a bitter smile.

"I wonder. I also thought the same thing the first time I heard it. But it seems to be true. At the very least, there's no doubt that Galahat-san believes it."

"It was Galahat's mother that fell sick? Not Galahat himself?"

Rei questioned whether it had actually been Galahat himself who had fallen ill and had been delirious due to his sickness but Murt nodded naturally.

"There's no mistake. After I heard the story, I checked it with Galahat-san several times."

"In that case.....after becoming the president of Azoth Firm, did his personality change or something like that?"

Rei asked that suspiciously but Brazos denied it.

"No, before Bolton become the president of Azoth Firm in Gimuru, he worked as an adventurer. From that time, his reputation was already the worst."

"If so, he would have shunned Galahat.....no, why would Bolton help Galahat if he hated him?"

Although Rei had responded unintentionally to Brazos' words, no one here could answer the obvious question.

Even Murt, who had thought about this question several times after hearing the story from Galahat, could not find an answer.

Although Rei couldn't believe it, Murt shook his head and continued his story.

"Anyhow, Galahat-san felt greatly indebted to Bolton because of that matter. In addition, the impression was even stronger because he was just a kid back then. Although Galahat's mother eventually died, since then, no matter how bad Bolton was, Galahat considered him as a blood related brother and his only relative."

Hearing those words, a certain thought came up in Rei's mind.....but judging that wasn't possible, he shook his head as he spoke.

"It's not unusual for a strong impression or experience as a kid to affect a person's behaviour even after they grow up. "

A childhood experience could strongly influence a person's personality after they became an adult. In Rei's previous world, the impact from a childhood experience to this extent would be considered unlikely but not negligible.

Rei thought about it but brought himself back to reality at the sound of a clap of hands.

"Although the story has gone a bit off topic, I now understand more about Galahat as a person. So you said Galahat gave you orders regarding Azoth Firm, but what were they?"

At Freon's words, Murt also felt that he had gone off topic. As soon as he was about to continue on.....

"Wait."

Rei's voice stopped him.

"Rei?"

"What's the matter?"

Freon and Brazos asked him but Rei just closed his eyes and listened with his ears.....

"It seems we have visitors downstairs."

Was what he told them.

Chapter 144

After hearing Murt speak about Galahat's life from birth, Murt was about to speak about the current situation.

But at that time, Rei told everyone to keep quiet before telling the others they had guests.

".....Guests?"

Freon asked Rei, but from his tone, it was clear they were not welcome guests but rather troublesome ones.

"Even though they were one-sidedly stomped by you at Pamidor's smithy, have they still not learned?"

"No, it's quite different from the people that time. If anything, this time they're mere thugs.But."

"But?"

"Apparently they're looking for Murt. They've been yelling about that."

The other three had surprised expressions at Rei's words. Being able to hear the voices of people causing a disturbance on the first floor from the second floor, how good did his hearing have to be.

In this case, Freon and Brazos, who had known Rei for longer, were more surprised. Although Murt didn't know Rei that well, he could still accept it because he had seen the violence that had unfolded at Bolton's mansion.

"You, how good is your hearing."

Rei shrugged his shoulders at Freon's words.

"Set's senses are even sharper."

"No, it's wrong to compare yourself with a Griffon, an A rank monster."

Rei got up from his chair and glanced at the amazed Freon.

"As it is, they're bothering the inn. I'll go and fix them up a bit."

"Well, I guess I'll go too."

At Rei's words, Brazos stood up and put his bottle of wine onto the floor as he wanted to rampage around as well. However, Rei shook his head and Brazos stopped getting up.

"Sorry, but please wait in this room, Brazos and Freon."

"Mm? Are you going to rampage alone Rei?"

Brazos asked as Rei looked towards Murt, who had sat up on the bed

"There's a high possibility that the disturbance below is only a distraction. If that is the case, someone to guard Murt will be necessary."

".....If that's the case, I think it would be fine for just Freon and me to go down."

"This is the inn where I'm staying in for now. It would be better for me to settle the disturbance since I'm the reason they're troubling the inn."

"Well, if you say that, I can't say anything else. I understand. Freon and I will remain here. Freon, are you okay with that?"

"Yes, I originally didn't want to stick my head into the uproar down there."

With the consent of the two of them, Rei turned to Murt.

"Speaking of that. I'll be going downstairs to settle the disturbance, so you should rest your body. Ah, you can eat the food if you're hungry."

Rei looked at the dishes lined up on the floor and left the room as Murt's belly let out a growl at the smell of the food.

".....For now, can I have the grilled meat?"

Rei heard Murt asked as he walked out.

As Rei left the room and headed for the first floor, a voice shouting could be heard.

"Hey, just hand over Murt! It would be in your best interesting to listen and do as we say."

"I told you already, we don't have any customers here called Murt. And even if I did, I wouldn't tell such people like you! Please leave."

Lana, the proprietress of the Dusk Wheat Inn, was facing off against about 10 youths.

She did business with adventurers and mercenaries every day. Naturally,

some of them would start fights in the dining area. If you considered that Lana had seen this happen countless times as she managed the inn, even though the shouts of the hooligan youths in their late teens to early twenties were loud, they were just like the tweets of baby birds to her.

"Haa? Hey, you! Did you think you could speak so insolently to us and get away with it!?"

He was probably the leader. He had long hair and sharp eyes.....the man with the slovenly hair threatened Lana.

"I am the proprietress of this inn. Naturally, I have the obligation to protect my customer's safety. This is my duty."

She refused once again. This seemed to cut off the last reason the thugs still had. Or rather, the limit of their patience was reached. A man next to the leader took a knife out from his chest and threatened to thrust it at Lana's face.....

Smash~.

Such a sound echoed into the surroundings.

[.....]

The thugs didn't know what had happened, it was the same for Rei, who had been about to throw an iron knife he had taken out from the Misty Ring. No, Rei had clearly seen what had happened, but rather, he was surprised that a total stranger had taken action in a problem that he had caused himself.

Everyone looked towards the direction of the sound and saw the figure of the man who had tried to attack Lana with a knife a few seconds ago. However, pieces of wood were scattered around the man, who had been knocked out cold.

(That was, a chair.)

Rei thought to himself.

Yes. At the moment the man pulled a knife on Lana, A chair had been thrown from the dining area, flying past Lana before hitting the man. The chair then broke apart as it hit the man.

".....Please leave."

Even though the chair had flown right past her, Lana told the thugs with an unsurprised expression. Together with her imposing appearance, she gave off the same atmosphere as a mother-in-law

"-! D-Don't joke around! Do you think we're idiots that would leave just like that!? Hey, who's the bastard that threw that chair just now! Show yourself!"

The voice of the leader of the thugs echoed through the first floor of the inn and the area nearby.

Unluckily for the thugs, a merchant group led by a well known merchant called Vettman was staying in the inn tonight. Vettman led a merchant group of armed merchants, they traveled across the frontier without any mercenary escorts. Although they look just like merchants, their skill to fight back against monsters and thieves was even higher than some of the mercenary escorts around. And in Gimuru, Vettman favoured the Dusk Wheat inn.

They had finally arrived at the city of Gimuru after traveling through remote frontier for over a month. As they were partying to celebrate their safe arrival at their destination in a familiar inn, a bunch of thugs suddenly appeared. They made absurd demands to Lana, the proprietress of the inn and brought out a knife against her. With that, the people of the armed merchant group could never have kept quiet.

"Ah. Sorry, but I threw the chair. It's been noisy for quite a while. I'm finally enjoying a party after being away from this city for so long. If you make any more noise, I'll strip your hides from you to sell."

Even though he wasn't quite as tough looking as Pamidor, a strong man who looked like a bandit or pirate took a step forward from the dining area.

"I can't let just you look good Yusla. I have complaints as well. I'll join you if you go for it."

The next person to walk out was a smart looking, smiling man in his thirties. However, even though there was a smile on his face, his eyes were not laughing.

Maybe they were good friends or just wanted to see a good show, people from the merchant groups came out one after another.

Furthermore, mercenaries and adventurers who stayed in the inn but didn't belong to Vettman's group came out, even those who had just come for a meal appeared from the dining area.

"So, that's your position.....we, don't you know who is behind us!? You look like you're just merchants! Causing a dispute with us and Azoth Firm, do you think you will still be able to do business in Gimuru!?"

More people that he had imagined had come out. Despite feeling more nervous, the man still shouted out with energy. Seeing the man like that, Rei, who had seen the series of events from halfway down the stairs inadvertently let out a laugh.

"Kukukukuku~, I can't stop it. Haha.....ahh, sorry. Even though you had been energetically shouting at everyone, when more people stood up against you than you expected, you got cold feet. Still, bringing out your backers after that.....are you sure you're a thug and not a street performer or something?"

Rei's words hit the key points. The thugs and merchants were staring each other down a few seconds ago as if they wanted to see blood, but then those on the merchants side unintentionally burst out into laughter.

"Hahaha~, yes, that's for sure. It's as the kid says. Right now, you guys are just Goblins borrowing the power of a Dragon."

At the words of Yusla, the thugs all glared at Rei with blue veins on their foreheads.

"Who is this brat. You, if you keep playing around I'll slice up your face!"
".....If you can do that."

With a wry smile at the word of the leader of the thugs, Rei gently jumped over the handrail of the stairs. Although he jumped from a height of over 5m, he landed on the first floor with almost no sound.

The merchants watched Rei, who looked like a kid, with sharp eyes. With Rei's series of actions just now, as an armed merchant, he instinctively understood Rei's strength from his experience.

"Hey."
".....Ah. It's nothing."

The smile that Yusla and merchants had a few seconds ago disappeared as they exchanged a sharp look.

However, the thugs took an action opposite to the armed merchants.

Even if they saw Rei kill his momentum as he jumped off and landed, they didn't feel anything about that and scowled at him.

".....Hey, you. Are you trying to tell us what to do brat? Are you crazy and think you're some kind of hero? If you apologise right now we'll forgive you, go home and suck on your mother's breasts as you cry yourself to sleep."

"To be honest, I didn't want to this if possible.....but my guests have taken the time to visit me. I should welcome you all."

"You must be Murt!"

One of the thugs said that. The colour of greed appeared in the eyes of the other thugs when they heard those words.

When they had been hired, they had just been told to drag over a person named Murt. They never would have guessed Murt would just be a kid. They all had dark smiles at their unexpected good fortune to earn some easy money.

Looking at the thugs.....Rei took out the Death Scythe from the Misty Ring as usual.

(Come to think of it, I could use a spear, but I don't know when I can get more back due to Bolton's order. I should save them for now.)

Thinking to himself, he swung the Death Scythe lightly.

Roar-!

Even though it was a light swing for Rei, a big scythe weighing over 100kg was swung. The thugs staggered several step back from the wind pressure alone, some even fell back onto the floor.

The thugs may have been hot blooded, but they weren't adventurers.....no, rather, they were a group of those people who didn't want to work as adventurers because of the high danger. Because of that, they hadn't heard the rumors about Rei, which had spread among the adventurers in Gimuru. Rei was famous in the city of Gimuru because of the Griffon that followed him around.

When he wore the Dragon Robe, which had the effect of making him seem ordinary, he just looked like a novice adventurer you could find anywhere. In addition, with his robe and build, he looked like an apprentice mage.

How strong was that attack, as expected, the faces of the thugs that were red from humiliation turned blue with fear.

Seeing that, the armed merchants talked silently with their eyes. They calmly observed Rei as he threatened the thugs with his Death Scythe. For example, where did Rei get his Death Scythe from? Where did he take it out from? It had to be a type of item box. He could lightly handle the Death Scythe with one hand. They could guess its weight from the noise the wind made as it was swung.

Like that, as they carefully observed Rei, they enjoyed the liquor from their half finished party as they wondered what kind of settlement this disturbance would reach.

"Well, you have two options. The first is to fight against me here with my Death Scythe.Ahh, don't worry. I don't plan to attack you with the blade. The handle is enough."

Roar-!

Saying that, Rei swung the Death Scythe again. The pressure from the wind blew across the faces of the thugs.

Even if they were hit by the handle and not the blade, they could imagine how much power would be behind the attack.

"The second option.To be honest, I recommend this option. You can apologise for the disturbance you've made, hand over all your weapons and money, then leave.Come on, which one do you chose? Ah, that's right. Even if you take the first option, after I knock you all out, I'll still take your weapons and money."

Rei urged them to choose with a smile. Although the thugs had had their pride hurt with what had been said, they didn't think they could beat Rei. With their abilities and the abilities of Rei before them, their choice was obvious.

Chapter 145

".....Is this enough?"

The leader of the thugs asked after they had put all their weapons and money onto the floor.

As expected, there were no spears, which Rei had wanted. There were mostly knives as well as a few one handed axes and long swords. If he just sold all the weapons, he would earn a reasonable amount. If he sold them. And.....

"Heh~, I didn't expect this."

Rei murmured to himself as he checked the contents of the cloth pouch the leader had taken out from his chest. After all, there were several gold coins in the pouch. It wasn't an amount of money a typical city thug would have. Rei understood how they had gotten it and he spoke to the leader with a thin smile.

"There was quite the reward for this.....pity for you. Next time, you should consider the difference in strength between you and your opponent."

"....."

The thugs kept their silence at Rei's words.

Looking at them, he directed them to the door with his chin.

"Leave. If this happens again next time, if that happens.....well, I'll enjoy it then."

As Rei told them with a smile on his face, the thugs didn't say a word.....no, rather, they left the inn without being able to say anything.

Rei guessed that a few of them still had a certain amount of money hidden away at their chest, but he decided that it was still his top priority for them to get out of sight as soon as possible without causing anymore issues.

After the thugs had left, Rei put all the coins into the pouch containing the gold coins and turned towards Lana and the merchants.

"Sorry for the inconvenience."

"No, don't worry about it. Since you're staying in my inn, you are my customer."

"Well, as expected of the proprietress of the Dusk Wheat! A mother for all of us!"

In response to the voices from the armed merchants, Lana turned towards them with her cheeks slightly red.

"You all, don't go about doing such dangerous things! The reputation of Dusk Wheat would be disgraced if my customers are injured!"

"Ah, sorry, sorry. But this inn is an important place for us.....we can't let things be if people barge in rudely."

"Seriously, all of you. As punishment for you all this time, you'll be eating Fang Boar stew for breakfast tomorrow."

Despite saying that, she didn't feel bad after hearing that her accommodation was considered an important place. Lana said that with a smile on her face.

At the words, Fang Boar stew, the merchants cheered. Rei spoke to the merchants.

"Sorry for pouring cold water on your party."

"Don't worry about it kid. We did this on our own decision."

Yusla, as the man was called by his friends, smacked Rei on the shoulder as he laughed.

With a wry smile on his face, Rei threw a bag containing gold, silver and copper coins he had taken from the thugs to Lana.

"Rei?"

"As an apology for disturbing your part, I'll pay for today's food and drink. I'll put this down as a deposit. If it's not enough, please tell me later."

[OHHHHHHHHHHhhhhh!]

At Rei's words that he would treat them, the armed merchants and adventurers in the dining area all cheered.

"Kid, you're small but very generous!"

Yusla laughed heartily at the word treat. Though Yusla didn't mean bad, Rei still thought his expression looked a little angry.

In the meantime, one person from the armed merchants came over to Rei.

At first glance, he looked to be in his forties and about 170cm tall, not much difference from Rei. He had an approachable smile on his face.

However, his eyes were different. It was different to the residents of the city, his gaze was deep and felt like he could see through you. With that look, Rei could guess who he was. He was the man who led the armed merchants.

"We'll accept your treat tonight. I would like to thank you on behalf of my group."

He gave a quick bow as he held out his hand.

"Sorry for the late greeting. I'm Vettman, I lead the convoy of these people around the frontier."

Rei replied as he shook hands.

"I'm Rei. An adventurer. Don't worry about me treating you. I got you rolled up in my problems and killed your partying mood. Consider it as making it up to you."

As Rei grasped Vettman's hand, he couldn't imagine that it was the hand of a merchant. It was a hand that had calluses from holding and training with weapons. He would have believed it if he had said they were adventurers or mercenaries who carried things between towns.

As Rei looked at Vettman in admiration, on the contrary, Vettman was slightly at loss as he looked at Rei.

Before he knew it, the large Death Scythe Rei had been swinging had disappeared, there were also no calluses on his hands from grasping weapons in his hand. However, the attack Rei had demonstrated in front of the thugs earlier was similar to that of sword wielded by a first class warrior.

As Rei's body was produced by Zepairu, it's recovery and healing ability was much greater than ordinary people. For that reason, even if Rei used the Death Scythe, proof of training, such as calluses would not form. For that reason, right now, Rei's hands were still had a softness which would not be expected of a fighter, but of course, this was impossible for Vettman to realise.

"What's wrong?"

Noticing his state, Rei asked, but Vettman immediately shook his head as if it were nothing. As expected of the person who led a group of armed merchants, his face didn't show any expression at Rei's question.

"It's nothing. By the way, I want to ask, that big scythe just before....."

"Ah. Well, I think you can guess, but I have an item box."

"What.....indeed I had considered it, as expected. No, this is the first time I've seen a real item box. I've heard about extremely small pseudo item boxes being used.....but this is the first time I've seen a real item box."

Speaking in admiration, Vettman turned his eyes towards the dining area.

While watching Vettman, he recalled the pseudo item box Elena had used in the dungeon when Vettman mentioned it.

"If you don't mind, why don't you join us? You did treat us, Rei-san, by all means come over."

"Ah, no, I'm sorry. I have some people waiting in my room. In addition....."

Rei turned to look at the inn door.

With that, Vettman understood what Rei wanted to say. He gave a small nod.

"I see. So the people earlier were your guests. Please wait a moment."

Saying that, Vettman went to the dining area and came back in less than a minute. There were two small barrels of liquor in his hands.

"This is a small thanks, please have this. I don't know whether it will suit your taste but it is my favourite liquor."

".....I see. I will accept it gratefully."

Rei didn't like liquor that much, but there was Brazos back in his room, who had boasted that his blood was made from liquor. As there wasn't enough wine to drink, Rei gratefully accepted it.

"We're planning to stay at this inn for about a month, so let's have another drink if the opportunity comes up."

Saying that, Vettman gave another bow and headed back to the dining area with the armed merchants.

The armed merchants, adventurers and mercenaries casually thanked Rei for paying for the food and drink for the night before following Vettman back to the dining area.

Lastly, the only people left were Rei and Lana, the proprietress of the inn.

"Sorry for the disturbance."

"No, don't worry about it. I'm accustomed to doing business with adventurers and mercenaries. I'll be returning to the dining area. Because Rei-san has generously paid for their party, I will make some dishes I don't usually make with my husband and let them go all out."

Like a plucky mother, Lana headed back to the dining area with a smile.

After seeing her leave, Rei stored the knives, long swords and one handed axes on the floor into the Misty Ring before returning to his room.

"Hey, how was it on the first floor? It seems they weren't easy to deal with."

When Rei entered the room, Freon called out. The room didn't seem to have undergone any changes. Rei shook his head with a smile as it seemed that the disturbance on the first floor had not been a diversion.

"The people on the first floor were street thugs. I guess they weren't a diversion?"

"Ah. Nothing much happened over here.....uh, what's with the barrels?"

"I got it from merchants staying at the inn."

".....How did it end up like this?"

Although Freon muttered that, Brazos sniffed the contents of the barrel.

"There's liquor in the barrels. In addition, from the rich fragrance, it's of substantial quality.Rei, if I remember correctly, you can't drink that much right? If so, don't you think it's a useless treasure even if you have such a superior liquor....."

Brazos' eyes seemed to be nailed to the barrels as he gave a small sigh and put the barrels on the floor.

"Don't look at it so desperately. I planned to give it to you from the start."

"Mmmm, as expected of you Rei. You know how to respect your elders unlike a

certain female adventurer."

".....Hey, may I ask who that female adventurer is?"

Disregarding Freon's glare, Brazos opened a barrel promptly and poured himself a cup of liquor. A rich fragrance unique to aged liquor wafted around the room.

"This is, it's definitely of high quality. Several silver coins.....no, if you're unlucky, you might even need several gold coins to get it."

Brazos murmured unintentionally as he enjoyed the fragrance.

While looking enviously at Brazos, Murt spoke up.

"So, can I continue talking? About the matter of Galahat-san's situation....."
"Ahh, that reminds me. If even you are being targeted by the people hired by Azoth Firm, isn't it also dangerous for Galahat?"

"Of course. That's why he's hiding in a place that only Galahat-san and I know of. It would be fine if he recovered back to his prime state, but his injuries have yet to heal. He can't just move about violently."

".....Well then, wouldn't it be better just to stay hidden at your hideout and lay low for a while?"

At Murt's words, Rei asked. If he had just hidden at his hideout, the disturbance this time might not have happened.....

"That would be too slow."

Murt replied in frustration.

"Slow?"

"Ah. I said a little about it at Pamidor's smithy, but Galahat-san gave me some brief instructions, to take over Azoth Firm. Even though Azoth Firm is a collective group, there are naturally various factions inside."

(This was also a measure to protect Bolton from you.)

Murt thought to himself. Of course, he did not say that out loud.

"Well, that's true. As long as there are three people in the world, factions will form."

"Well, I guess. So, about the factions.....naturally, it's not about the current

faction in power. The people in the main faction stick close Bolton to get the sweet deals from him. I hate that sort of underhanded behaviour. Then there are some people who are trying to work honestly for the city of Gimuru."

".....Are there?"

At Murt's words, Freon asked involuntarily.

Murt, who was hired by Azoth Firm himself, knew more than enough about Azoth Firm's reputation as he nodded with a bitter smile.

"For now, there is. Naturally, there are overwhelmingly fewer of them compared to the main faction."

"However, I've lived in Gimuru for a long time.....but I do not recall ever hearing about such people. There's only ever been bad rumours."

Brazos muttered as he savoured the liquor he had gotten from Rei.

Murt stared at him drinking the delicious liquor enviously for a few seconds before shaking his head and continuing to talk.

"That's right. Think carefully. If there are people getting sweet deals, won't there be people trying to stop them? But the suppression.....was a bit overpowering, the result was that they were treated coldly and given trivial jobs."

".....Then, even if Galahat instructed you to do so, how can you even attempt to take over Azoth Firm?"

"As Rei said, that is the case if you think about it normally.....but not everyone who is a part of Azoth Firm is on Bolton's side. No, the people close to him are likely only his close associates or people like them. In the end, the organisation is made up of good, ordinary merchants.Otherwise, would Azoth Firm, with a man as greedy as Bolton, be able to operate peacefully so far? Of course, because Bolton has a knack for skillfully coercing people, he's not completely incompetent....."

It just ended up backfiring this time with Rei, as Murt continued.

"In that case, I guess there must be people who have been crying out against Bolton's tyranny up until now."

"I can't deny that. Actually, I have also seen such people several times after being hired by Azoth Firm."

Murt gave a sigh as he said that.

Chapter 146

Murt explained in Rei's room. Rei spoke up after listening.

"So, what are you going to do? In the first place, from what I understand, the people who support Galahat are all doing trivial jobs, how will you gather them?"

"Well, simply speaking, we will use force. Originally, it would have been best to slowly sound out the people working in Azoth Firm to gradually expand Galahat's support. Even among people who were sent to trivial duties, there are few people in Azoth Firm who don't know the relation between Bolton and Galahat-san as they are aware of the internal circumstances."

"But, then. As far as I've heard from your story, hasn't Galahat always been an adventurer?"

Moving his cup away from his mouth, Brazos unexpectedly asked.

Murt nodded at this question.

"Ah, that is so. If that wasn't the case, it wouldn't have been possible for him to rise to rank B in the first place."

"In that case, if Galahat became the president of Azoth Firm.....would he be able to manage the business properly?"

".....I see, now that you say it, that is true. Galahat has certainly never been involved in the management of the company since he was born. Even if he overcame Bolton and took over Azoth Firm, would he be able to manage the business properly....."

Freon nodded at Brazos' words. Bolton had been the one running Azoth Firm until now. However, Galahat, who would take charge after, was an adventurer and not a merchant. Naturally, he had no experience running a company like Azoth Firm at all.

Although he was a talented person at the frontier, would he be able to control Azoth Firm, which handled the weapons sales in Gimuru and numerous other cities. Freon had doubts but Murt nodded that there were no problems.

"Galahat-san is definitely not a merchant. However, since he had been hired by Azoth Firm since he became an adventurer, he knows a lot more about the workings of Azoth Firm than the merchants around here. Besides, as the president, Galahat-san would only be the representative of Azoth Firm unlike how Bolton is. Decision making would be carried out by the group of merchants that support him."

(A kind of democratic system it seems.I hope it won't end up as a mob ruling.)

Rei thought about Murt's words and the Japanese politicians where he used to live. No, rather, the politicians who worked for their own personal gain. Turning tail to another country to bring yourself benefits rather than for the interests of their country, there was no choice but to watch out for those who only looked for their own personal gain.

He quickly shook off such thoughts from his mind. Because this was no longer Japan that he was in.

"Well, anyhow, even if Galahat takes over Azoth Firm, I guess Gimuru won't fall into confusion?"

When Rei asked Murt, he shook his head as if to shake off the idea.

"Ah. Of course there will be some disorder, but it should be kept to a minimum. Anyhow, any employee that doesn't support that bastard, Bolton, has been sent off to trivial duties. However, most of them stayed because they believed that Azoth Firm would eventually screw up somewhere. They should be enough."

"Then, it might be better to head for the hideout where Galahat is right now."

At Rei's musing, everyone in the room looked at him.

Among them, Freon spoke up as the representative.

"Why? I understand that we have to hurry, but it's night already. Do you mind if we head over tomorrow? No, rather, the thieves that Bolton has employed would be better at night activities."

"You don't need to worry about them. For example, even if they gathered a group of people to push into this inn just now, Azoth Firm is probably trying

their numbers now. Even now they might be hiring mobs. If we wait until tomorrow to take action, won't the difference in power between Bolton and Galahat increase? Even if most of the force the other side has are thugs like the ones from before, their power is in numbers. If you consider that, it's better to move fast.Murt, you were talking about Galahat taking down Bolton with force, but how big a fighting force do you actually have?"

"Among the adventurers hired by Azoth Firm, the ones helped by Galahat, the ones that like Galahat-san's character.....30% if we looked at it optimistically. At worst, 10%."

"In other words, we can only count on 10%. What is the specific number of people?"

"It's about 5 people."

Rei was unexpectedly surprised at Murts words.

5 people were about 10%, with some simple math, it meant the number of adventurers hired by Azoth Firm was close to 50.

"I knew that Azoth Firm was a big business, but to hire that many adventurers.....that was truly unexpected."

Like Rei, Brazos was also surprised.

"The other 20% in an optimistic situation, can we consider them to be neutral?"

"Well, I guess. There were various circumstances where we had no choice but to cooperate with Bolton's people, but I felt that they were friendly to Galahat-san."

"Hmm, if we can't count on them, it would be better to not include them in our potential force. More than that, it might be better to move as soon as possible if that in the difference in combat forces. Losing in numbers, we won't win if we lose in speed as well. Speaking of winning....."

Freon glanced at Rei.

Judging from his ability during the Harpy subjugation request, Rei never fit into the D rank category. Considering he was followed by the Griffon Set, an A rank monster, his overall strength was about as good as an A rank adventurer.

And above all, this uproar happened because of Rei. Given that, he would

probably display his power.

"Rei is definitely going to get caught in the uproar this time.....I mean, considering what happened at Pamidor's smithy, you're already fully involved. If that's the case, it would be best to gather our fighting forces to go against Azoth Firm. Naturally, that includes me and Brazos."

After all, they had received a request with Rei and formed a party. Even if they didn't want to, they would still inevitably be dragged into the matter. Besides, they would be doing something about the disreputable Azoth Firm and improve the atmosphere in Gimuru a bit.

"Because of that, we should quickly head over to where Galahat is hiding. It's a game of time from now on. If we move fast enough, Azoth Firm shouldn't have their forces gathered yet."

Standing up while talking, Freon pulled Murts arm to help him out of the bed.

"Ah, Ahh. I understand....."

Nodding as he was pulled up, Rei handed over the halberd and leather armour that he had stored into the Misty Ring.

"Here, if we go now, you should at least have your equipment. It looks okay now, but after joining with Galahat, there will definitely be fighting."

"This is, my.....ah, I see. You did have an item box, Rei."

"Such an idiot, had you forgotten already? In the first place, all this uproar happened because Bolton was greedy for this."

Rei looked at him in amazement. As if to escape from Rei's gaze, Murt started to put on his leather armour.

While watching the two of them, Brazos stood up after gulping down one last cup of liquor. Even if it was a small barrel he still hadn't become drunk from drinking that much, was it because he was a dwarf or because he was Brazos.

"So, where's the hideout Galahat is staying in?"

"It's a small cabin in a backstreet. Because it's quite old, no one ever goes there, I don't believe they've found it."

Murt answered Freon's question as he put on his leather armour and looked

puzzled at Rei who was frowning after hearing his reply.

"What's wrong?"

"No, Galahat is hiding in an isolated old cabin?"

"Ah. At least that's what it looks like. Inside, there's enough preserved food hidden inside to live for a few days, there are also various ways to buy things."

".....Ah, I understand."

At Murt's words, Freon nodded in understanding.

"In other words, Rei is worried if there really aren't any people who come near the cabin."

"Ah. It looks old.....or rather, since it looks worn down, not many people want to come over. However, there is a possibility that orphans or slum inhabitants will go over. There is also the possibility the information will eventually get to Azoth Firm that way."

You could say that the governor of Gimuru, Daska, was a good governor. But there were still slums. No, rather, because Gimuru was a frontier city, most of their expenses had to be in defense and the development of other areas had to be postponed.

".....I see. I definitely can't say it's impossible."

"Ahh, I think that it will probably be okay. Galahat-san has done a lot of work to help the people in the slums. He has a lot of trust from them."

Finishing putting on his leather armour, Murt replied as he looked over his halberd. Freon shrugged her shoulders at his words.

"Whether they're an orphan or a slum inhabitant, they do all they can to live for another day. Whether such people will hold a priority on gold or trust..... well, of course, there will still be some who hold trust as more important, still, there will many more people who would fall and take the money."

".....It seems we need to hurry then."

Saying that, Rei opened the door. After that, Freon and Brazos went out, followed by Murt after he was ready.

As they went down the stairs, they eventually heard the lively voices from the dining area.

"I wanted to drink a bit more."

Brazos looked towards the dining area enviously, but was immediately struck on the head by Freon's sheathed long sword.

"You already opened a barrel in Rei's room, is that not enough! Seriously, this is why this Dwarf....."

"That hurts-! Freon, can't you be more reasonable? Every time you hit, you hit my head. At the very least, use your hand. Even though it's in its sheath, is there anyone who would hit someone with a sword?"

Although Brazos complained while holding his head, Freon gave a snort.

"If I hit a stone with my bare hands, my delicate hands would be hurt."

"Keh-, what delicate hands. A person with delicate hands can't be a warrior."

It was already a familiar scene to Rei, but Murt was worried as this was the first time he had seen it.

"Hey, Rei. Even though we're heading right into the center of the uproar, is it fine to let them argue?"

Murt quietly asked Rei. Rei put on the hood of his Dragon Robe without any particular expression as he nodded that there wasn't a problem.

"I haven't known them for long, but that's normal for both of them. It would be better than them being tense and slow."

"No, but. To have an internal fight now....."

"As I said before, they're not really fighting, that's just how they get along. You don't need to mind it."

".....If Rei says so then it's fine, but is it really okay?"

"Ah, they're both C rank adventurers. They have reasonable strength and skill."

While talking like that, they left the stairs as they arrived on the first floor of the inn and headed for the exit.

"Oh, are you going out?"

Seeing the 4 of them leave, Lana came out of the dining area to ask.

Seeing they were all armed, it was clear that they were heading out for dangerous business, but her tone was still normal.

"Ah. To the person who sent to thugs over earlier."

"Is that so? Then, please take care of yourselves."

Giving a quick bow to Lana, the 4 of them left the inn.

They could hear the lively laughter and cheers from the party going on in the dining area that Rei was treating as they left the Dusk Wheat.

Only Brazos kept looking back towards the dining area in envy.

Chapter 147

".....Hey, what do you think about this?"

Rei muttered in amazement.

Brazos shook his head with a small sigh when he heard those words.

"One way or another.....that's how it is."

In front of them, there were three injured adventurers who fainted and fallen to the ground.

Rei and the others were currently at the stables behind the Dusk Wheat. Before meeting up with Galahat, he headed for the stables to pick up Set.....Rei and the others saw that the entrance to the stables had been smashed by something hitting it from the inside with the three unconscious adventurers lying at the front of the smashed entrance. At first, Rei had wondered if they were friends of the thugs who had barged their way into the inn, but the equipment of these men were clearly different. They all wore metal armour and one of them was even wearing full plate mail for some reason. Considering how good their equipment was and that one of them had a long sword, they were probably a different group of people. At the very least, they were a different group of people from the thugs.

"Perhaps.....no, they definitely came to kill or capture Set. Anyhow, Set is our strongest force. In addition, doesn't the mastermind of this all, Bolton, want Set? He probably wants Set to be captured alive. Even if he decided to kill Set, it wouldn't be hard to imagine how much the materials of a Griffon would be worth."

"So, they let the thugs rush into the inn as a diversion to give them time. Finally, the adventurers targeted and attacked Set, who was resting quietly in the stables.....this was the result in the end though."

A Freon's reply, Rei turned to the other three, who were lost in thought.

Set's strength alone was already phenomenal and was further enhanced by

the magic item he had equipped, the Bracelet of Herculean Strength. The chainmail worn by one of the adventurers had been torn open and he had suffered a deep wound at his abdomen under it. As for the person wearing plate mail, it had been crushed by a single attack from Set with fragments scattering into the surroundings.

Set probably just found them a hassle and hadn't killed them outright. However, autumn was setting in and with such a deep wound, they would have frozen to death if left overnight.....the other two weren't as serious but they would at least suffer a cold.

"In the first place, what's with the difference in all their equipment? Chainmail, plain metal armour and full metal plate. It's not uncommon for three different people to have different equipment, but for there purpose, isn't it too varied?"

With an emphasis on mobility, chainmail still had a higher defense than leather armour. Metal armour that protected the chest and torso, also known as a brigandine. Full plate mail covered the entire body in metal armour. The equipment the three adventurers wore were confusing and didn't make sense in many ways when they thought about it.

"I think, there's a difference in thinking."
"A difference in thinking?"

Rei asked Brazos in reply.

"Mm. For example, the one that wore chainmail might have been more concerned about secrecy. On the contrary, the one wearing full plate mail probably decided on defense in fear of Set's strength as a Griffon.....something like that."

"I see. I guess the communication between the adventurers didn't go that well then."

While nodding at Brazos' words, Rei reached for the weapons that had fallen to the ground.

Two spears and a bow. However, the bow wasn't usable unless repaired because the string had been snapped.

(Although they tried to launch a surprise attack, as expected, it would be scary to have to fight a Griffon in close combat with swords, axes and clubs. That's why they chose spears. It could only go badly when you consider that they had to use the spears inside a small narrow space like the stables.....well, I guess they were terrified by Set.)

Thinking to himself, he stored the two spears and bow that he had picked up into the Misty Ring. At the same time, he picked up the quiver that had been rolling around near the man wearing chainmail.

"Aren't you a little greedy?"

Since the prices of iron ore were currently rising, iron spears were already expensive as they were. Even for these adventurers, it would be a considerable loss if they lost their spears here. Though Rei thought about Murt's words, he replied with a small smile.

"In the first place, aren't they enemies? Picking up the weapons from those we defeat will decrease their fighting capabilities and strengthen ours.. Is there anything improper about it?"

".....Well, if you say so. Considering the price of weapons right now, I feel sorry for them. Anyhow, as long as Galahat-san replaces Bolton as Azoth Firm's president, they will probably be dismissed even if they try to seek compensation for their lost spears."

"Well yes, that's probably true. They should know that would normally be the case if someone asked for compensation from people they had been hostile against."

Murt nodded at Freon's words, but Brazos shook his head.

"Well then, I guess that's that. Even if Galahat is an adventurer, he should have a lot of allies. These guys are just attracted to the profits. If Galahat becomes the new president, he will probably replace people of this nature."

"Yes, yes, I don't like people who change attitudes so easily."

"You know. Galahat definitely favours you and you do respect him. But aren't those adventurers simply hired by Azoth Firm for work? They're currently being employed by Azoth Firm and the president happens to be Bolton, this is normal for adventurers."

Freon explained in exasperation. Murt didn't seem convinced as he looked at Freon.....he then turned towards Rei, who had just stored the spears into the Misty Ring.

"Wait a moment. Will Azoth Firm really not end up compensating them for their weapons? This is Galahat-san after all."

"I wonder."

"Haa-? Then Galahat-san will eat a big loss!"

".....Well then. Can I ask for a reward for helping you?"

"No, but that is that."

"Look at these two. Because they took the Harpy subjugation request together with me, they got rolled up in this disturbance as well. Naturally, they can ask for rewards if they actually do something. Considering that, I want you to overlook me taking these spears."

"I can help you with the weapon stores....."

"There wouldn't be any problems even if things stayed the way there are right now. In the first place, I don't need any particular maintenance with my weapon as long as I supply it my magic power. The only thing I need to maintain is the knife I use for stripping materials. Since Pamidor just came to the city of Gimuru and isn't controlled by Azoth Firm, I have no problems with a blacksmith either. If I were to put out something that could be considered a problem, it would be that I can't by throwing spears like the ones I took just now....."

While talking, he picked up a stone from the ground.

"I wouldn't be so worried about throwing weapons if I had stones like this."

With a pom~ pom~ sound, Rei tossed the stone into the air before catching it back in his palm.

(Well, that said, spears have more offensive power than stones.)

In the end a stone was a stone. The impact would be strong, but the influence of wind on it when thrown would always be different as stones came in different shapes and sizes. In other words, if the distance was quite far, the hit rate of stones would vary quite a bit. Considering that, spears were the best shape for throwing. Because they were heavier than stones, the power and stability were also increased. Moreover, their offensive power was much

stronger than stones because of the pointed spearhead at the end.

(It can also pierce to seal movements. With stones, it's hard to adjust for their shape.)

"Rei?"

Murt asked as Rei played around with the stone in his hand. While looking around, Rei rolled the stone around in his palm.....

"Fu~!"

Taking a sharp breath, Rei threw the stone in his hands. The way he threw it was not like the so called overarm baseball pitch but more like the way a ninja would discretely throw a shuriken. As the stone flew out, it cut through the darkness towards a tree growing near the inn.

"....."

For a moment, Freon, Brazos and Murt didn't know what Rei was doing. But Freon and Brazos immediately realised why. Murt looked towards the tree, only realising something when he heard a heavy thud from that direction.

"Gururu~"

Set, who was in the stables, was a little worried. Usually, he would not come out and would wait for Rei to come in to pick him up, but tonight, he made the decision to come out himself. Naturally, he had no injuries from his fight against the three adventurers. In the first place, the highest ranked adventurer hired by Azoth Firm was Galahat at rank B. Because of that, all the other adventurers were obviously C rank or lower. Even if they had multiple ways of attacking from medium to long range with spears and bows, a Griffon, an A rank monster, was in a different league.

Lightly stroking Set's head, he headed for the tree a short distance from the stables. At its base, an adventurer had fallen down after getting knocked out.

"I say, the leather armour has a deep mark where the stone hit....."

Murt muttered as he gave a sympathetic look towards the man. The stone thrown by Rei was terrifying. He had seen Rei's attack blast Galahat through several wall in Bolton's mansion. Murt knew how much raw strength Rei had

and gave his condolences in his mind.

"No, why would you feel sorry for this guy who was probably hired by Azoth Firm?"

Freon muttered, but Rei shook his head after checking the face of the man.

"I thought they were the ones that attacked us at Pamidor's smithy, but it seems I was wrong. They had been wearing black padded clothes instead of armour to reduce the sounds they made as much as possible. Murt, do you know this guy?"

".....I haven't seen him before. But since Azoth Firm hires a huge number of adventurers, there naturally are some I don't recognise. Especially since I work almost exclusively with Galahat-san."

Murt said that in a bragging tone. Rei, Brazos and Freon looked at each other.

"What do you think?"

"First of all, he's definitely scouting. Checking if the three adventurers down over there can beat Set, and if they can't, what to do next.Well, I don't think it will be of any use though since he's been knocked out. That man's greatest purpose.....rather, was to confirm the fighting strength of Galahat's faction."

Freon nodded at Brazos' words.

"I guess. If possible, he probably also wanted to find out where Galahat was hiding."

"So, the question is, what do we do with these guys?"

Rei and the others looked at the man who had fainted under the tree and the other three, knocked out near the stables.

"Weren't these guys meant to be part of Azoth Firm's force if everything had gone well? Can we just tie them up and leave them at the inn?"

"What Freon said is reasonable.....but I feel like they could escape from being tied up and appear as a fighting force for the other side."

"Well, these guys probably wanted to earn some money."

Bolton felt that his position was being threatened. It would be cheap to hire adventurers in large numbers if he could protect his position.

If they had people who could watch over the adventurers, Rei would rather have them join their party instead. Thinking about Freon and Brazos' points, it was a headache thinking of how to deal with those four people. It was a headache to the point that he almost physically had one.

(It's out of the question to split up our numbers. Although they don't have to fight with us, we need someone we can trust to some extent.....wait?)

As Rei thought to himself, he heard a lot of footsteps coming closer to there location.

He pulled out his Death Scythe from the Misty Ring. Seeing that, Brazos also held his weapon.....

"What, it's you guys?"

Appearing from the darkness, Rei lowered his Death Scythe after seeing their faces, exposed by the moonlight.

"Do you know each other?"

Murt turned to Rei. He had been involved deeply into this matter because of his great admiration for Galahat. Because of that, he was was greatly cautious about strangers.

However, the person who appeared in Murt's cautious eyes spoke with a smile, seeming not to care about the halberd that was pointed towards him.

"I thought that it was rather noisy at the back of the inn and came to take a look.....nice to see you again, Rei-san."

Saying that, Vettman, the leader of the armed merchants staying at the Dusk Wheat, gave cheerful smile.

Chapter 148

It was near the stables at the back of the Dusk Wheat. A fight that couldn't really be called a fight. As Rei was worrying about what to do with the four knocked out adventurers who seemed to have been hired by Azoth Firm, Vettman, who led the armed merchants currently staying at Dusk Wheat, showed up.

"I did cause some noise, however.....I didn't think it was that loud."

Although he wasn't ready to swing his Death Scythe anymore, Rei still watched somewhat cautiously.

"Well, I have people with a variety of skills. That aside, I heard about your situation. Do you mind if we lend a hand? Of course, I'm not offering to fight for you,"

".....What is your goal?"

"I don't have any particular goals. But, I would be able to connect with a remarkable adventurer. I thought that it would be good to keep our connection active.In short, it's an investment."

"Remarkable, eh."

Rei glanced towards Brazos and Freon for a moment.

.....In this case, he didn't give Murt even the slightest consideration, who looked subtly unsatisfied. But as expected, Murt didn't say anything in this situation.

"No, no. Not those two, the remarkable adventurer I'm referring to is you Rei-san. Those two are definitely veteran adventurers and have abundant experience. However, as far as I can see, you are the most talented, Rei-san."

With a smile, Vettman directed a sharp gaze towards Rei. Rei shrugged his shoulders while taking the gaze straight on.

"Even so, I'm still a D rank adventurer. It's been less than a year since I was promoted."

"Although rank is certainly an indication of the skill of an adventurer, it is my judgement that it is not an absolute evaluation. Well, I'm aware that is a minority in the world. In the first place though, it would be hilarious to say that someone with a tamed Griffon has no skill."

For a moment, Vettman glanced at Set, who was standing quietly beside Rei. It should be noted that he was able to keep calm even as he looked at a Griffon with his eyes. In fact, the people who came with Vettman stiffened slightly when they looked towards the Griffon.

Seeing that, Freon and Brazos watched the conversation quietly as they looked at each other, exchanging a silent conversation.

That is, whether they could trust the person before them.

As soon as they reached a conclusion, Brazos spoke up.

"Rei, it's true that they can't join us for battle, but how about cooperating with them here? Speaking of Vettman, he created a group of remarkable merchants. I don't think he would try to deceive you on this."

They were made up of remarkable armed merchants who traveled from the relatively safe Imperial Capital all the way to the not so safe frontier. As armed merchants, they didn't hire escorts and some had been in the business for up to 10 years. As a natural result, Vettman's name was known around adventurers. Especially in the city of Gimuru on the frontier, adventurers and merchants who didn't know his name were almost all greenhorns.....or people like Rei, who was severely lacking in this aspect.

Any how, Rei looked towards the four adventurers lying on the ground after hearing Brazos' words.

"If that's the case, could you keep an eye on these four? We can't kill them for a variety of reasons and if we let them go, they would end just going back to the enemy."

"....."

Closing his eyes for a few seconds to think about it, he eventually opened his eyes and gave a small nod.

"I understand. That is easy enough. Then, we'll keep an eye on them in our

rooms. How long do we have to keep them?"

"That right.....I think until tomorrow probably, if it gets later than that, we'll send someone over to tell you. Is that okay?"

"Ah, Ahh. I think we'll be able to fit that in somehow even if it goes late into tomorrow."

Seeing the spooked Murt who was panicking slightly, Vettman gave a smile like that of a nice person.

"That's that then. If possible, we would be happy to connect with Azoth Firm, since they handle the arms market here in Gimuru. Any how, our business has met with various inconveniences here for a while.....no, there's no point telling you about it."

At Vettman's bitter smile, Rei was satisfied with their reason for helping.

Given Bolton's character, he would have never given a fair deal in the first place. Liking to take advantage of his opponent's weakness, it was easy to guess that he had pressured Vettman heavily. Rather than revenge, Vettman just wanted a deal that was mutually beneficial, not just for one side or the other. That was what Rei thought.

"Well, I understand why you would want to cooperate. However, even if you help us here, I can't promise that we'll be able to help you facilitate your business, are you sure about that?"

"Yes, yes. Of course. I'm not asking for special treatment. What I expect is a fair deal."

"....."

Rei looked towards Murt as if asking.

".....Eh? Why me?"

"No, among the people hired by Azoth Firm, you're the only one that can be considered Galahat's subordinate. In the first place, I was just threatened by Bolton and Brazos and Freon are completely uninvolved."

Murt was confused but collected himself at Rei's words.

"Come to think of it, that's true. Certainly, I'm in a position to say that.Ah, Vettman-san. I've heard various things about you. That is, you found Bolton's

policy of sacrificing those that lived on the frontier and various other things repugnant. Surely, if Galahat-san becomes the representative of Azoth Firm, I don't think he will try to force you to do anything, but I can't promise. After all, Galahat-san has no knowledge on how to manage the firm. Basically, regarding the operation of the firm, decisions will be made with the cooperation between Galahat-san and the firm administrators. So, what I can do is to report to Galahat-san that you helped us.....is that okay?"

"Yes, of course. Rather, I don't want to force you to owe us a favour here. Doing things like that goes against our business morals."

"Well then.....I'll leave them to you."

Murt gave a quick bow towards Vettman. Despite having a surprised expression for a moment at Murt's actions, Vettman clapped Murt's shoulder with a smile.

"Leave it to us. Then, feel free to go crazy all of you.However, please make sure you're not defeated. Even if it is only a little bit, we did help you. If the other side wins, the deals we would have to make would become harder than ever."

".....Then, couldn't you just not guard them but help use with your full power instead? As long those guys see the situation, wouldn't your name carry more value? In particular, I think you would be given preferential treatment in future deals."

Like that, at Rei's natural question, Vettman shook his head with a wry smile.

"Unfortunately, we can't do that. We are merchants, not mercenaries. Even though we're armed merchants, that is for self defense only. We're not mercenaries who sell our strength as our business. Although you might think that is heartless of us, this is our absolute commitment, or it might be better to say, rule, as merchants. Regardless of whether we are attacked, I can't break that rule as the head of a merchant group."

Right now, before Rei was a man who walked the way he had decided without leaving it. Rei saw that and bowed his head.

"I see, I apologise. It seemed I tried to force my unreasonableness on you as I didn't know the way you worked."

"No, don't mind it. From other people's viewpoints, we seem like idiots. In fact, there are half merchant, half mercenaries groups as well. We just decided on this rule, merely that.So, please leave the four people to us and get a move on as quickly as you can.We'll carry them away."

With one last word, Vettman spoke to his associates behind him, who gave a small nod before starting to carry the four people back into the inn. After seeing them off, Rei, Set and the other two turned to look at Murt.

".....Well, let's go."

Nodding at Murt's words, the party left the Dusk Wheat.

"Indeed it's dark."

Freon murmured as they hurriedly walked towards the slums.

With Murt's guidance, they were heading towards the place where Galahat was hiding. Various shops, bars and the well known so called night entertainment places lined the streets close to the slums. Naturally, those that lived around here weren't rich, so the moonlight was the only thing illuminating the autumn night sky.

(.....Even in this world, the moon isn't different.)

Rei looked towards the moon unintentionally and thought to himself. As it was a different world, there might have been 2 or 3 moons.....or maybe a blue or purple one. However, there was no difference between the moon that Rei could see and the one from Earth. No, rather, there might be various difference that could be seen by experts, but Rei was just a high school student from a rural area and couldn't see any differences.

"Damn, if it was possible, I wish I could run."

Murt muttered as he clicked his tongue.

"Don't say something so unreasonable. In the first place, you're one of the few people know where the hideout is. Do you want to lead people over by running all the way there? With your strength, you wouldn't even be able to oppose an adventurer from Azoth Firm."

"Guh....."

Murt was hit where it hurt by Brazos' words.

Of course, Murt was just a D rank adventurer. As it was, his strength was better than others and more than anything else, he had been trained by Galahat and didn't believe he would lose out to any other D rank adventurers.

(If it were an ordinary rank D adventurer, that is.)

The figure of Rei, who was following behind him, appeared in his mind.

Rei was also a D rank adventurer. But was also a person who had ranked up with great speed since he appeared in the city of Gimuru. His strength was not just at the D rank level. After all, when Rei had looked at Bolton murderously, Murt had been unable to stand and had stayed silent the entire time.

(.....Wait. Though his killing intent wasn't directly targeted at me, the blood lust was enough to make me freeze. However, Bolton faced that straight on..... and although he wasn't much better, doesn't that mean that Bolton was more courageous than me since he was able to speak?)

Thinking like that to himself, he shook his head in a panic.

"It is true that Galahat-san is the only rank B adventurer hired by Azoth Firm. However, there are also a large number of rank C and D adventurers. If it was just me, it would be suicidal to just charge straight in."

During this, Murt was thinking to himself, was he really inferior to Bolton in terms of courage? Murt shook off the idea.

At his words, Brazos nodded as walked behind Murt in the dark.

"So you do understand.Leaving that aside, we've defeated almost 10 adventurers hired by Azoth Firm, but there should still be a little over 30 left. Do you know the specific strength or rank of the remaining ones?"

"I don't know exactly, but I can give a rough guess. There are few rank C's and not many rank D's either. The majority of them are rank E and F. If it comes down to a fight, you probably won't see any rank G's or H's"

Murt explained while walking down the path lit only by moonlight. Hearing his explanation, Freon was puzzled.

"Why is that? The ones with the same skill as those that were taken down by

Set near Pamidor's workshop and those that attacked Set at the Dusk Wheat be factored in?"

"Ahh, that's impossible. At the very least, there should be very few thieves."

"Gururu~?"

Set wondered why his name had popped up, tilted his head and gave a cry as they walked down the street.

Should it be said, as expected of a Griffon, he had great night vision and there was no unsteadiness in his gait as walked in the dark.

"Don't mind it. You did an outstanding job."

Freon lightly stroked Set's back.

"Guru~"

Seeing Set give a cheerful cry, Murt felt his excessive tension dissipate.

The party walked through the night like that, and eventually, a familiar hut entered his vision. At first glance, it was quite old and looked like no one still lived there. However, the insides had been repaired as needed and the building was in as bad shape as it looked.

".....There it is."

That, was the place where Galahat was hiding.

Chapter 149

The cabin near the slums. It was the outskirts of the area and wasn't exactly in the slums. Still, due to its location, very few people would come by. It was also night time, when fewer people were about. During this time, Rei's group found the cabin and quickly went towards it.

".....It certainly looks worn out. If anything, it looks like it would collapse at any moment."

Brazos muttered as he looked at the appearance of the cabin. Freon nodded silently in agreement.

"Well, I implemented various measures so that people wouldn't come close."

Murt replied as such and reached for the door to the cabin. Top right corner, bottom right, bottom left and top left. After pushing the door in that order, a clicking sound was heard.

"I see, a door with a special mechanism."

Rei muttered in admiration. Like this, it wouldn't be possible for people who didn't know it to open the door.

Murt opened the door with a proud smile.

Although it was a door that could be opened easily if the correct procedures were followed, it was quite high quality.....in addition, it had been made by a thief with no relations to Azoth Firm. Even if you tried to open the door without following the procedure, it wouldn't open. Without any other means, the only way would be to destroy the door.....however, not many people would make that decisions after seeing the condition of the cabin. There would be no point in forcing open the door and collapsing the cabin at the same time. In the first place, the cabin wasn't something people would usually turn their attention towards.

"Ah.....sorry Set, but I'll have to ask you to wait outside."

Comparing the door entrance with Set, Murt said that apologetically.

"Guru~"

However, it was normal that Set wouldn't be able to enter buildings. Having no particular objections, Set gave a small cry and lay down in the shadow of the cabin.

"Set, I'll leave it to you to keep guard."

Saying that to Set, everyone entered the cabin.

(Maybe because he got helped out at Pamidor's workshop, Murt's attitude towards Set has softened quite a bit.)

Rei thought to himself with a small smile.

".....So, where is the important Galahat?"

The first person to speak after entering the cabin was Brazos.

The figure of Galahat, whom they had been told was in the cabin, was nowhere to be found.

"Please wait a moment."

Murt looked around the inside of the cabin and moved aside a barrel containing trash in a corner of the room without panicking. He then reached out to the floor under where the barrel was to do something. The next moment, a part of the floor moved sideways with a clacking sound and stairs to a basement appeared at the location previously hidden by the floor panel.

"What to say. Should I call this expected or unexpected."

When the stairs appeared, Brazos spoke in amazement. Next to him, Freon nodded. Only Rei looked at the mechanism that hid the stairs to the basement in interest.

"Anyhow, it's a hideout. I think you understand why it goes this far? It's just to make sure."

".....All this just to make sure, it must have cost quite a sum of money to build here."

Of course, there was a possibility that it was made by just the two people who

knew about this place, Murt and Galahat, but that would have taken too much time. Still, if they had asked someone who specialised in this area, since it was such a device, it should have costed quite a bit. That was what Brazos thought as he spoke, but Murt shook his head.

"No, the one who helped me make this mechanism was Galahat-san, so it was finished with minimal expense. Even the minimal expense could just be paid to Galahat-san."

Murt said that proudly before realising that this wasn't the time to discuss it. He stepped onto the stairs to the basement.

"Then I'll go in. Galahat-san should be in the room ahead."

Saying that with a nod, he went down the stairs.

As expected, it was impossible to have a light as they went down the stairs. Or rather, because it was a short distance down, there was no place to put one. After going down the stairs, the floor above closed back and the surroundings became covered in darkness.

"Hey, will this be okay?"

Because of the surroundings, Freon became uneasy as she asked Murt. Murt nodded to indicate there were no problems.....the next moment, he realised that no one could tell that he had nodded because of the darkness and so he spoke up.

"No problems. It's a mechanism that automatically closes the floor when there's no weight placed around the stairs. When we leave the basement, there's a switch on the floor near the closed panel that can open it if you press it."

".....I guess that's true. Isn't it hard to be trapped inside such a dark place?"

"Kukuku~. Afraid of the dark, Freon has surprisingly feminine aspects."

"Shut up drunkard. In the first place, I'm a woman."

"No, I don't think I'm drunk right now."

While exchanging retorts, they all got to the bottom of the stairs in less than a minute. There was only a single door in front of them.

Of course, it wasn't a unique door like in the Margrave's residence, but a very

ordinary door that you could find anywhere.

"Here."

Murt just said a single word before knocking on the door.

"Galahat-san, are you there? It's Murt."

".....Did you bring anyone along?"

He probably guessed that there were other people besides Murt. A voice asked inquisitively from the other side of the door.

This was a hideout only Galahat and Murt knew, so there must be a situation that would require him to bring people other than themselves to this place. At Galahat's question, Murt answered after taking a short, deep breath.

"Pardon me, because of our shortage in fighting strength.....I asked for help without asking for permission."

".....I see. In the end, older brother still has the stronger force."

When Galahat heard that, he murmured with a sigh. The sound of a lock opened by a sound echoed before the door was opened. Although the figure that appeared had stiff movements, Galahat was still able to stand on his own two feet.

(Heh~, has he really recovered from his injury in the past few days? I don't know if it was a potion or healing magic, but the medical technology in this world isn't low.)

Rei thought to himself in admiration. However, Galahat unexpectedly stiffened when he saw Rei looking at him.

"R-Rei!?"

"Ah. Didn't you hear what Murt said earlier? Finding helpers. That's me.To be accurate, us."

Rei shifted his body to reveal Brazos and Freon.

However, Galahat had no time for them. Rei was in front of him. Yes, the person who had declared that there would be no next time for Bolton. If he was here then.....

"Murt-!"

Galahat reproofed Murt on reflex.

That was not unexpected. In the first place, Galahat had decided and resolved himself to defy his older brother, who he had obediently followed all this time. All to protect Bolton from the person in front of him. Despite being told that there wouldn't be a second time, after feeling the fear of death that day, Bolton had tried to get back at Rei. His older brother's life would be hard to save. In order to protect his older brother from the person before him, he had to pull his brother down from his seat of power. Judging so, he decided to revolt against his older brother, who he loved. Even so, the person who was the cause of all this was here. From Galahat's perspective, Murt's actions were nothing less than a betrayal.

If his body had fully recovered, he might have drawn the sword at his waist. But in order not to worsen his injuries because of his rage, he didn't make any actions that could be seen as hostile before Rei.And, a single hope. A variety of emotions mixed together as Galahat stopped himself.

Several seconds passed. Galahat asked quietly.

"Rei, did you come here after realising what my older brother is doing? If you came here knowing that.....will you kill my older brother as you declared before?"

".....Well, about that. The previous case has already been reported to the Margrave Rowlocks, the lord of Gimuru."

"-!?"

At those simple words, Galahat held his breath. Next to Rei, Murt also had a shocked expression.

"As the lord of the city, it seems that the Azoth Firm controlled by Bolton has become troublesome. It's tacit understanding, but I've been given permission to kill him."

"Daska, is it."

He couldn't believe it.....no, he didn't want to believe it. He wanted to be told it was a lie. Galahat looked towards Brazos and Freon with such eyes, but his face turned to one of despair when he saw both of them shake their heads in silent acknowledgement.

At this point, Rei spoke up.

"Well, if the the president of Azoth Firm is replaced and doesn't do what it has been doing so far, Margrave Rowlocks will be fine with that."

"Really!?"

Galahat felt hope at Rei's words as he looked towards him, until he heard Rei's next words.

"As the lord of the city, that's fine for him. However, though I threatened you about what would happen if there was a next time, this happens not even after several days. What are you going to to about that?"

".....That, that is.....I will try to stop him next time."

"I've heard that before. At that time, I believed your words and what did Bolton do? After finishing a request and coming back to the city today, when I went to a blacksmith's workshop, I was told that weapons shops have been told not to do business with me."

Without letting Galahat interject, Rei kept speaking. As it was a fact, there was nothing that Galahat could even retort.

Instead, it was Murt that spoke out. He stepped forward to protect Galahat as he spoke.

"Wait. Regarding the matter of the weapons shops, Bolton decided that after Galahat-san fell unconscious from your attack. There's no way Galahat-san would be able to stop that no matter what."

"What about it? I allowed Bolton to live with the condition that there would be no second time. Galahat accepted those conditions. In that case, isn't this Galahat's responsibility? Even though he was unconscious, events still continue on.....do you think that would convince me?"

"Th-That is!"

Although Murt intended to continue to reply, Galahat grasped his shoulder to stop him.

"No, no. It's as Rei said. Though I promised not to meddle with him anymore, I didn't keep it. It's my fault."

"Galahat-san....."

Murt didn't care what would happen to Bolton, in fact, he felt rather good about it. However, considering the shock that Galahat received knowing what would happen to his brother, Murt couldn't agree with Rei.

Seeing the two of them like this, Rei gave a sigh before speaking.

".....All right. I promise not to take his life. I'll agree to that."

"You won't kill him?"

"Ah. I won't kill him."

Rei nodded at Galahat, who asked to confirm.[I won't take his life.]was saying in other words that he wouldn't kill Bolton. That is why Galahat asked to confirm.

"Are you sure?"

"That's right. This is the biggest concession I can give. If you can't follow through even this time, I will go take revenge on Bolton without your cooperation. Naturally, various issues will happen compared to if I cooperated with you. However, I already have tacit understanding about that with Margrave Rowlocks. I will be able to avoid the worst situation of having a bounty placed on me."

(Although.....instead, he will probably make some demands of me.)

Rei thought to himself.

In fact, if that did happen, Daska would happily use various methods.....to keep Rei in the city of Gimuru. In addition, he would try to keep Rei as unaware about it as possible. As an individual, Rei possessed great value as a fighting force.

"....."

Hearing Rei's words, Galahat thought silently for a minute. He finally spoke up after deciding on it.

"I understand. I will accept your demands."

Galahat replied with a bitter expression.

Chapter 150

Rei would let Bolton live. However, he wouldn't care about anything else aside from that. Galahat nodded at Rei reluctantly.

Of course, this wasn't something Galahat wanted to accept. But Bolton, his older brother that he loved, had his life in the balance. Even if it was just a one sided relationship between the two of them.

(But.....if I refused Rei's proposal here, as he said himself, he would attack Bolton by himself regardless of me. And with Rei's abilities and his Griffon, if the two of them attacked, Azoth Firm can't deal with with them with just large numbers of low ranked adventurers. If they fought a straight on battle, they might be able to tire him out or exhaust his magic power, but in the end, Rei and Set are just a single person and animal. If they went for an ambush or night attack, there would be no hope. In that case, I have to join hands with Rei if I want to protect my brother from the worst case scenario.)

Thinking to himself, he swallowed his depressing thoughts.

Why had it come to this. He couldn't imagine. However, the situation that was happening now was what his older brother caused. Even though they were only half connected by blood, as a younger brother, it was not the best choice he could make, but there was no better choice available. Galahat understood that and reluctantly accepted Rei's proposal.

"Come in. First of all, I would like to tell you the current situation."

Galahat moved away from the front door and welcomed the four of them into the room.

The room was somewhat bigger than the cabin above. However, there still wasn't quite enough room for the four of them to relax.

Anyhow, this hideout was only supposed to be used by Galahat and Murt. There was only a single bed and chair in the 3 tatami sized room. As expected it was difficult to fit 5 people in the room. At the very least, Rei had a small build

and Freon was a slender woman. Normally, Brazos was shortest in the group, but although he was a Dwarf and short, he had a lot more muscle than most humans. Because of that, Brazos took up an amount of space closer towards Galahat and Murt.

TLN: 3 tatami is just under 5m²

"Seriously, there's no room because of you, you muscle daruma. Go change your muscles to gold and money. That would be more useful."

"What did you say, you bitch! Why don't you sell all of your useless years after you turned 20! If you did that I would have some room to move around."

Galahat took a deep breath in shock as everyone sat on the bed, a chair and on the floor.

Seeing the two of them like that, Rei gave a sigh in amazement as he spoke out.

"I know that you're on good terms with each other, but keep it down. Galahat is in shock."

At Rei's words, both of them turned to look at Galahat for a moment. Indeed, Galahat was looking at both of them with wide eyes.

Maybe they tried to avoid that look, Freon gave a small cough before sitting back in her chair.

There was only one chair in the hideout, but on account of being a woman, she asserted her claim on it.

In addition, Galahat was sitting on the bed as his injuries had yet to fully heal. Murt sat beside him as Galahat's assistant. As a result, Rei and Brazos were sitting on the floor.

"Ahem. So, the current situation.....Murt?"

"Ah, yes, yes. The current situation is disadvantageous for us. The people who were forced into trivial jobs after opposing Bolton's management policy are supposed to cooperate with Galahat-san. However, that doesn't make much of a difference since the mainstream faction....."

"I see. It would be better to think that it will be impossible to easily drag older brother down from his position of president."

There were many adventurers in Bolton's faction, but except for a few people, most of them followed orders simply because they were being paid. As long as someone stood up to take Bolton down, there would be a few people who would join against him. Galahat judged that with a sigh. At the same time, he was also concerned that the adventurers would hurt each other.

"I agree. Because we lack the influence, if we want to force Bolton down from his position of president and put Galahat-san on top of Azoth Firm, there's only the brute force method. We'll make our move when Galahat-san's supporters tie down the movements of the executives of Azoth Firm. During that time, we have to find the easiest and fastest way to secure Bolton. If the changeover of power goes smoothly, there will be less time spent fighting. The fighting between adventurers that Galahat-san is worried about will also be kept to a minimum.....is what I was told."

"Is what you were told?"

It wasn't my own thoughts, Freon asked with a strange look at Murt's words.

At Freon's question, Murt nodded naturally.

"There's no way I can come up with such a calculated plan. This was thought up by the members in Azoth Firm cooperating with Galahat-san."

".....I see. Well, Certainly, if the battle time is short, the chances of adventurers getting injured becomes much lower."

"That is right, as for people who like to fight.....well, I won't say there are none, but they are certainly a minority. Murt, is my brother currently in his mansion in the upperclass district?"

"Yes. As you know, he has spent a disgusting amount of money on it. It's defenses have been upgraded quite a bit. "

"Do you mean there are traps in the mansion?"

Rei asked with a frown, but Galahat shook his head.

"I don't think he would put traps inside the mansion. Or rather, if he did, he wouldn't be able to live in it due to the danger. If it were me, I would reinforce the walls and the fences around it with strong metal."

"In that case, it wouldn't be a problem if you just jumped over the wall or fence right? In the first place, we have a small group. There won't be any problems if

we just let Set go back and forth to carry people. Even if it's Brazos, the heaviest of us all, that short distance should still be fine."

"That won't be possible. There definitely won't be traps in the mansion, but it will be different if it's the walls or fences. There's always the possibility that thieves would try to get in. My older brother would have prepared for that as well."

Galahat did not say any more, but having lived in the mansion of the president of Azoth Firm, who carried out heavy handed business, he had seen righteous thieves and mercenaries try to break in several times as well as people who had suffered from disadvantageous deals and wanted to steal something back. However, most of them were caught by the patrols along the upperclass district. Others were caught after being discovered paralyzed on the ground after being electrocuted by a kind of magic item on the fences.

Of course, covering a vast mansion in magic items in the walls and fences would cost a huge amount of money. But it was possible with the financial strength of Azoth Firm, that was Bolton's power. Anyhow, Gimuru was a frontier city and there was a lot of danger. Those who skimmed out on money for their equipment paid the price with their lives. Azoth Firm dealt in the arms trade, the profit they gained by exporting weapons made from rare monster materials found at the frontier was huge. With that huge profit, they engaged in a lot of behind the scenes deals and bribery to lobby for for a variety of conveniences. Their power used that as the foundation. For example, the group that barged into the inn and the adventurers who attacked Set in the stables would both go innocent.....although, they were more likely to get away with just a small fine.

"In that case, it looks like we'll have to break through the front. Well, I won't say it's impossible. Anyhow, it's Bolton.....or rather, the highest ranked ranked adventurer hired by Azoth Firm is you at B rank right? Everyone remaining is lower than rank B. That means at highest, they will be rank C. There are about 40 of them, but it won't be impossible to deal with them."

Although Rei said that as if it was a trifling matter, there was person who was hung up on it. It was Galahat, the person at the center of this storm.

"Please, wait a moment. It's true that Rei will definitely be able to blast away

the adventurers hired by Azoth Firm from the front. However, As I said earlier, there are many people who work for them just for the money. As much as possible, I don't want to hurt them."

"No, you want to minimise the the battle time and break through the front at the same time? You, aren't you contradicting yourself?"

At Freon's words, Galahat nodded with a bitter expression.

"Ah. Of course I know I'm being unreasonable. However, let's think about it. Let's assume that we knocked out most of the adventurers here and settled the uproar. However, in that case, what do we do about the escorts we have to provide to the merchants heading to other cities from Azoth Firm tomorrow?"
"It's the guild's.....oh, that's right."

Freon sighed.

Currently, Azoth Firm had a bad reputation in the guild and few people would accept escort requests. Even for adventurers currently hired by Azoth Firm, it was only because the pay was good. In other words, Galahat knew that in the short term, other than adventurers hired by Azoth Firm, no others would likely take up merchant escort requests.

Alternatively, they could recruit more people if they lowered the request rank to rank F or G. However, if they included adventurers to the extent of beginners, there was a high chance that they wouldn't even add to the fighting strength of the escort at all. While there might be some talented people, the probability was only 1 in 10,000.

Knowing what Galahat wanted to say, Freon clicked her tongue.

"But, then what are you going to do. If you can't defeat your opponent, the battle duration and the number of people who get injured will only increase."
".....Ah. Because of that, I will depend on Rei. We'll have to depend on Rei. However, if possible, I would like to avoid causing any major injuries. Killing is obviously not allowed."

"Is it really necessary for me to consider that? I've said it several times already, but to be honest, I could settle this entire thing myself. Even so, I bothered to work with you. Are you trying to tie my hands and feet before I fight?"

"I don't know how to put it.....please!"

Galahat gave a deep bow.

Rei thought about it for a few seconds as saw Galahat's worried look.....and soon spoke up.

"Well, I can accept that as a request."

"Really!? I understand. Please do it. Would a reward of two platinum coins be enough?"

"Eh!?"

Murt gave a surprised cry at the extent of the reward when Galahat said it.

Two platinum coins. That size of a reward for a request could not be found in rank D, which was Rei and Murt's current rank.

"All right. However, the only thing I can do is go easy on them. Naturally, I won't be able to give everyone only light injuries. You'll have to consider bone fractures as light injuries."

Because there was a method of healing called magic in this world, injuries on the level of bruises could be healed in a few minutes. Even if it's a fracture, it wouldn't be difficult to heal it on the spot if it was a good mage. Naturally, to heal a bone fracture with magic, the mage would use up a corresponding amount of magic power, so it couldn't be used continuously. Of course there are things such as potions and magic power potions.....however, potions that could heal fractures in a short period of time cost a fair amount and potions that could restore magic power were even more expensive.

"I don't mind. If the internal organs are injured, like in my case, it will take time to heal. However, there are a few ways to fix it if it's only a fracture."

"Alright. The plan is decided. Let's get started. Anyhow, a lot of things happened today. As expected, I'm tired and want to wash up so I can sleep in a soft bed."

While thinking back on the lively events that had happened today, Freon stretched.

It hadn't be more than a day since they had subjugated the Harpies. Even though they had taken a few hours nap, as expected, fatigue still accumulated. Freon thought of the ultimate luxury, a warm futon to laze about and sleep in, as she stood up for one last job.

Turning to look at Freon, Galahat also stood up.

"Galahat-san? What are you doing?"

Murt asked questioningly, but Galahat spoke as he checked the condition of his body.

"I am dragging my older brother down from his position. I need to be there when it happens."

"Wai-! Galahat-san is not in a condition to fight! Even though we have to try to not kill any of them....."

"That's right. However, I am taking my older brother down from his position as president. It is absolutely necessary that I am there when it happens."

At Galahat's words, the group raised their eyes.

It was true that it would be different whether Galahat was there when they take Bolton down. But.....

"For that reason, you want us to bring along a burden like you?"

".....Please."

Galahat and Rei looked at each other for several seconds. Eventually, it was Rei who looked away.

"Do as you want. However, you'll have to protect yourself.No, Murt. You guard Galahat. Even if you say that there are different factions, the adventurers are still hired by Azoth Firm. It might become complicated if you fight at the front."

".....Sorry."

Galahat gave a brief reply. As they had decided their plan, they headed for the upperclass district as soon they could.

Chapter 151

"As expected, as it gets later you hardly see any people."

Leaving the slums, Rei muttered as they went towards the upperclass district along the main street.

It was nearly 10pm. For residents in the city, it was already late into the night. Naturally, the entertainment district, including the bars, were also nearing the end of their business hours.

As the party continued through, drunks sleeping on the roadside or people walking with a lover for the night could be seen. However, there were a lot less than when they had been walking to Galahat's hideout.

"Even if you do, there will start to be less people who fall asleep on the roadside drunk as it gets into late autumn. It's quite cold. If you're not careful, you might end up freezing to death."

Murt looked towards an adventurer who was snoring with a barrel on the roadside as he muttered in amazement.

"Well, there are plenty of kindhearted people around. In addition.....there."

Next to Murt, or rather, it was more accurate to say that Murt was standing in a position to shield the injured Galahat, Galahat looked towards a group of several people that were walking towards the sleeping man.

"They are?"

They didn't look like adventurers, but they didn't look like ordinary inhabitants either. Rei asked Galahat as he watched those people.

"Those are guild staff. They patrol around as night comes around to help out any drunks they find."

".....The guild does this as well?"

"Ahh. After all, Gimuru is a frontier city. Because there is a lot more danger, the presence of adventurers is indispensable. However, if you get drunk and fall

asleep outside and end up hurting your health or freezing to death, the number of adventurers who can receive requests at the guild goes down. In addition....."

Galahat expressed some pity as he saw the guild staff reach the drunk.

He shook his head as he spoke up again.

"Of course, the help isn't free. Anyhow, there's a risk of freezing to death in this season. That drunk will be asked to pay a good amount of money tomorrow morning."

".....That's surprisingly clever."

Hearing that they did something similar to gathering protection fees, Rei had a slightly surprised expression.

Next to Rei, not understanding the what was going on.....Set continued walking along while cautious of the surroundings and wary against enemy attacks.

"But even so, you can't just sleep on the roadside when you're drunk assuming that the guild will help you. If they don't help you, they don't help you."

On a side note, this helping fee was earning a reasonable amount of income for the guild.....even Galahat didn't know that.

Continuing to walk through the city, reaching the end of the main street, the upperclass district came into view.

"That reminds me, where are there adventurers and ended up siding with Galahat? You said that there were at least 5."

Brazos asked Murt as he carried his Earthshaker Hammer on his shoulder.

"They're going to go around to suppress the executives in Bolton's faction."

"Hm? Aren't the people cooperating with Galahat coming with us?"

"Of course not, there's no way that all the adventurers that are hired by Azoth Firm are in Bolton's mansion right? There will be a few people that will be sent out to protect the executives. In order to deal with that, I've gotten the adventurers on Galahat-san's side into the guards of the executives."

"Well, that is true....."

When Freon heard the discussion between the two, she spoke

"Is anything wrong?"

"No, from what I know about Bolton, even if you call them subordinates, they're just his cronies right? Sacrificing part of his own safety to protect others.....that would be strange for him to do."

At Freon's words, Galahat gave a bitter smile at the natural question. Beside him, Murt, who had been talking until now, also had a bitter smile.

"That is certainly likely if you consider the character of my older brother. However, the butler that has served my older brother's family for generations is sharp. Although it is less likely, there's a possibility he can persuade my older brother to dispatch a escort out. Even if it's just a few of his supporters. We can't be too careful about handling that.With Rei on our side, that's enough of a fighting force."

Saying that, he turned to glance at Set, who was walking slowly next to Rei.

It had the figure of the lion, the king of beasts and the eagle, the king of birds of prey, it was an appearance of a high ranking monster.

"In addition, to doubly make sure, we also have Set, a Griffon, here."

"Well, if you're an ordinary adventurer, you don't want to have to fight a Griffon."

Freon said that with a laugh.

In addition, in the city of Gimuru, Set was very popular. It would be awkward in many ways if it was known to the residents of the city found out that someone had fought Set.

(First of all, there's a high possibility that food stalls will no longer sell them food, the same goes for other merchants. As for weapons shops, they can still buy items with the influence of Azoth Frim, but not for long since Galahat will take Bolton down from his position tonight regardless. Even if there were residents in this city who didn't do business, if someone was hostile towards Setthere would be no doubt that they would be looked at coldly.)

As long as they lived in the city of Gimuru, they would inevitably have to interact with others. Whether it was the guild, inns, eateries or shops. Everyone would look at them with cold eyes each time, as a coward who tried to bully a popular character in the city.....it would be difficult to live in the city of Gimuru like that. They could ignore it if they had a thick skin and didn't care about what other people saw of them, but there weren't many people like that. If they did, they would naturally be forced out of the city.

Alternatively, there was a possibility they would sincerely apologise to Rei and Set.....but being hostile and fighting Rei and Set even once, to have the courage and guts to talk to them again after that, there weren't many with that much courage either.

(In the end, the other side was checkmated when Rei sided with Galahat.)

Freon thought to herself, and prayed that at the very least, the injuries of the poor adventurers would be minor.

Like that, as they silently walked down the road, they eventually reached the entrance to the upperclass district.

It was already late at night and the figures of several adventurers hired to patrol the area could be seen.

"Halt! From here on is the upperclass district. What are you doing here so late night.....huh? Galahat-san?"

An adventurer called out a warning, but as soon as he saw that it was Galahat, he lowered his axe to the ground.

To the adventurers, Galahat approached with a smile. Although his movements were still a bit slow as he had not completely recovered from his injuries, his movements were not unsteady.

"It's hard on you patrollers. Is something happening in the upperclass district?"

"Not right now."

The man with the axe shook his head slightly at Galahat's question. The man beside him with the long sword spoke up as if remembering something.

"That reminds me, it seems the adventurers hired by Azoth Firm are gathering at Bolton-san's mansion.....do you know anything about it?"

"Tch."

Hearing the adventurer's words, Freon clicked her tongue. Fortunately, the sound was so soft that it didn't reach the adventurers.

(Are they still gathering adventurers? Of course it's natural.....but if possible, if their fighting strength was lower it would be better.)

As Freon muttered that, the conversation between Galahat and the other adventurers continued.

"Ah. I've heard about it. There seems to be a bit of a dispute in Azoth Firm. I think that has had an effect. The people with me are concerned about it as well. Hey, have you heard the rumors about an adventurer with a Griffon?"

At Galahat's words, Set, who had been hiding behind and keeping alert, stretched his head out.

"Owa-!"

The adventurer that saw the Griffon was surprised and tried to lift his axe but was immediately stopped by Galahat.

"Hey, hey, stop it. As I was saying, this Griffon is Set, this is Rei, a D rank adventurer. Have you heard the rumors about him?"

".....Now that you mention it, I seem to have heard about it."

At Galahat's words, he remembered the adventurer with the Griffon. He turned his eyes towards Rei, who was wearing his Dragon Robe and an innocent looking face.

"Is Rei the kid in the rumors?Certainly, the rumors about his build can't be relied on. I've also heard he's unusually strong for his size. Well, that's fine. There's no problems if you know Galahat-san. You can continue."

The other adventurers had a sense of trust in Galahat. They let them pass without stopping them any further.

When they went far away enough from the patrollers, Rei turned to look at Galahat in amazement.

"Well, well, I can't lie like that so fluently."

However, at Rei's shocked look, Galahat accepted it naturally.

"Is that so? At the very least I don't recall lying about anything. It's a fact that adventurers are gathering at my older brother's mansion because of the dispute in Azoth Firm. Isn't it also true that Rei is involved in this dispute? It's just that we didn't tell them about everything....."

"That much information is plenty."

".....Rei, please remember. If you become a high rank adventurer, sometimes it is necessary to wrap things up in smoke to mislead people.Well, as far as you are concerned, your personality doesn't look like you would have problems with lying"

"Ah well. I'm not a good kid. Actually, if I was a good kid, I would have tried to reach a compromise with Bolton."

Rei replied with a grin and smile. If he had been a good kid, Azoth Firm wouldn't have been thrown into confusion in their present state, there was nothing more persuasive than that.

"Now then, either way, should we say as expected. A considerable number of adventurers are gathered at Bolton's mansion. "

"Sorry, Galahat-san. My movements got found out."

Coming back to reality at Rei's words, Murt lowered his head towards Galahat.

However, Galahat didn't mind it and put his hands on Murt's shoulders as he shook his head.

"Don't worry about it. They would have done this anyway. It wouldn't have been possible for me to bring this to the end without my older brother finding out. It just happened that they found out on your move."

".....Galahat-san, I will definitely protect you."

"That's fine. I'll be relying on you."

As they talked and walked along the main street in the upperclass district, even though it was into the night, a mansion brightly illuminated came into view.

"That's surprisingly extravagant, how to put it....."

Freon said that while looking at the mansion in amazement. Galahat spoke with a bitter smile.

"Usually the lights aren't all turned on. Perhaps they're wary of us today."

"Ah, that's right. That reminds me. Most of the people that were pursuing Murt were killed and the people that attacked Set at the Dusk Wheat didn't go back. Are they on guard because of that?"

"Rather than that, their fighting force is just under 40 people and as Freon said, almost 10 people have already been caught. In other words, according to our calculations, there are only 30 people left.....why do I feel there are more people?"

Brazos muttered as he looked at Bolton's mansion as they gradually approached. Certainly, the number of people who could be seen in the yard of the mansion was well over 30. Considering that they were likely there to guard the mansion, Rei could see that it was quite different from what he had heard before hand from Murt and Galahat.

"Perhaps they gathered the thugs that came over to the Dusk Wheat. I don't know if they're actually there to fight or to intimidate us."

Rei muttered that as they got closer to the entrance to Bolton's mansion, protected by the adventurers.

Chapter 152

Sakant and Fader were the gatekeepers guarding Bolton's mansion? Even those the two of them were usually at a bar, brothel or sleeping at this time, they had been ordered to stay on duty overnight and were complaining about it.

However, most of the complaints came from Fader, Sakant nodded occasionally while listening to his complaints.

Still, the money they were paid for the job was good. At the same time, when they thought about the large number of adventurers gathered at the mansion, they weren't so concerned about their job.

"Even so, I wonder what Galahat-san is thinking. Going against Bolton-san."
"I don't know. We should just do the work we've been ordered to do. Right now, almost all of Azoth Firm's adventurers are gathered here. It would be stupid for Galahat-san to try to attack here....."

As Sakant said that, Galahat, who had come to make that stupid attack, showed up at the gate to Bolton's mansion. In addition, it wasn't just Galahat. It was within their expectation for Murt to show up, who was almost like Galahat's younger brother, but there were still several more. Moreover, one of them was someone they didn't like to remember.

"R-Rei!? As well as.....hih-!"

Fader stiffened unconsciously when he saw the figure of Set come out from behind Rei. Next to him, Sakant still managed to speak up.

"G-Galahat-san. Galahat-san is suspected of rebelling against Azoth Firm. Will you behave yourself?"

"Rebelling.....well, since I'm trying to drag my older brother down from his position of president, I guess you can say I'm rebelling."

At Galahat's reply, Fader and Sakant's cheeks cramped. But Sakant quickly looked back towards the mansion. Seeing that no one had noticed them yet, he

was relieved.

Fortunately for Rei's group right now, the adventurers in the mansion were careless about their surroundings right now because of their numbers. Rather than being alert of enemy attacks, they were just sitting around in the garden making idle talk. Although they hadn't gone as far as drinking alcohol, they were still complacent due to their numbers. This was the merit of higher ranking adventurers. Even in such a situation, they would have still stayed alert. Unfortunately, most of the adventurers gathered in the garden were either E or F rank. Others weren't even adventurers and had just been gathered here to add to their number.

Of course, there were higher rank adventurers employed by Azoth Firm. Although not equal to Galahat, who was the only rank B adventurer hired by Azoth Firm, there were still D rank adventurers to some extent and a few C rank adventurers as well.

But most of them were inside the mansion as Bolton's direct escort or felt sympathetic or obliged towards Galahat, which would much fewer in number.

"Galahat-san, we have also been helped out by you before. Please don't say things like that. Can you apologise to Bolton-san and stop your rebellion?"

At Sakant's words, Fader nodded repeatedly next to him.

In any case, it had been their mistake to refuse Rei entry on their own judgement and it was impossible for them to not feel thankful to Galahat for helping them out there.

(But.....)

Thinking to himself, Sakant looked towards Rei and Set.

(The person that caused Galahat-san to have to help us is here, I can't say I don't have thoughts about that.)

They tried to appeal to Galahat, but even if it was Galahat, he couldn't stop the current situation moving forward. Commercial groups were being suppressed by the current Azoth Firm. Margrave Rowlocks had also already heard everything from Rei and had tacitly consented to Bolton's removal. Furthermore.....

Galahat glanced towards Rei for a moment.

Even though they were only half connected by blood, even if he had not cared for him, even if he was evil. To pay back the medicine Bolton provided when Galahat's mother was sick, he didn't want Rei to kill Bolton here. If he stopped here, he was sure that the first thing to happen would be Rei killing Bolton.

"Sorry, I can't turn back here. I'm sorry about my brother, but it has already been decided that my brother will have to resign from being the president of Azoth Firm at any cost."

".....At any cost, is it?"

Galahat nodded towards Sakant, who had a bitter expression.

They stared at each other.....eventually Sakant took a deep breath and pointed his spear towards Galahat.

"I'm sorry."

Sakant muttered softly.and glanced towards Fader who also pointed his spear towards Rei.

As expected of people who had worked as gatekeepers for so long. Fader understood his partner's intentions, took a deep breath and announced the enemy's arrival.

"Enemy attack! Galahat who rebelled against Bolton-san is coming! Everyone prepare for battle!"

The loud voice echoed into the garden in Bolton's mansion.

At first they weren't sure if they could trust those words or not, but eventually, several people came over to the gate to check.

The delay in their initial movements proved that most of the people in the garden were either just thugs or low ranking adventurers with little skill.

"Wow, they really came! And only 5 people!"

A young thug who was one of the first to head over to the gate gave a shout so that the people gathered at the garden would come over to the gate.

Almost all of them ridiculed Galahat who was standing at the front of the

group as well as Murt, who was guarding Galahat. Next, they looked towards Rei, who was wearing his Dragon Robe with the hood up, cutting a small figure which they thought couldn't make him an adventurer. At the back, they were more vigilant towards Freon with her long sword and Brazos with his Earthshaker Hammer, who both looked like veterans. And.....

"W-What, a Griffon!?"

Their eyes stopped when they saw the Griffon who was right behind Rei.

"Hey, wait a moment. A Griffon? There definitely was a guy with that rumor in the guild right? I heard he fought the D rank party Claws of the Hawk by himself and managed to beat them all."

"Really? I don't remember hearing about that. As for the Griffon, I know that he's loved as a mascot in the city....."

Like that, they started to bring up the stories that they had heard until Brazos knocked his Earthshaker Hammer against the ground.

Thump! Although he had just hit the ground, the sound it made echoed into the surroundings. At the same time, there was a small crater where the Earthshaker Hammer had landed.

While they were all stunned by its incredible power, Brazos carried his Earthshaker Hammer to his shoulder.

"Any of you who don't intend to fight me seriously leave! I'll only fight those who remain.However, if you stay, I will consider you my enemy. Only those prepared to take my attacks should stay."

[.....]

That move just now. They could tell how much power was behind it just from the hollow crater in the ground. The thugs and low rank adventurers went quiet. It was the same for the two gatekeepers.

However, being told to leave, given the situation, no one wanted to be the first to leave. After all, if they were the first to leave, there would be no doubt that they would be called cowardly right away. It would also be in front of so many people. Besides, this was the residence of Bolton, one of the most powerful people in the city. If they were considered to be traitors, it would be

very difficult for them to continue living in this city after tomorrow.

However, if they were told to attack Brazos, they would consider it even riskier after seeing what he had done.

One of them finally decided to attack verbally instead of physically.

"You, you think you can go against Azoth Firm in this city as an adventurer? Roll up your tail and quickly go home. I'll overlook this then."

"Yeah, yeah, how many people do you think you have? If you see the difference in numbers you should run away. Are you stupid?"

"Hey, leave quickly if you understand."

Several of them spoke consecutively. It seemed that they wanted to intimidate them with their advantage in numbers. However, to Rei, they were just like a weak dog with a not so loud bark.

It was the same even for Murt, the weakest in the group. Although they were somewhat surrounded, he was amazed that the other side hadn't taken even a single step forward. But there was no wonder. Excluding Rei, the weakest person in their group was Murt, a rank D adventurer. They were still stronger than the people in front of them. Murt had seen Rei's anger when he had confronted Bolton several days ago. He had been exposed to such bloodlust himself. Comparing that to the people before him right now, they were like a weak dog or a puppy barking at him.

After they had rambled on for about a minute, Rei decided that they couldn't settle things like this and took a step forward.

As soon as he did that, several people stepped back on reflex as Rei advanced. Persuading themselves that they were in the advantageous position, they started speaking again.

"W-What. You think you can be arrogant just because you have a Griffon? You're a weak brat. Don't piss off you seniors so much."

Incidents involving Rei had happened several times up until now. As a result, it was widespread in the adventurers guild in Gimuru that you shouldn't mess around with Rei. However, those stories had only spread among adventurers. Most of the thugs in the area didn't know about Rei. In fact, some of the

adventurers had only heard rumors about him and believed that those rumors had come about because of Rei's reliance on Set, a Griffon.

However, in a sense, they couldn't be blamed. After all, Rei hadn't quite reached 170cm in height and his body looked like it lacked muscle.

".....Haa."

However, Rei wasn't bothered enough to pay attention to those people. Today had been a busy day and tomorrow he had to sit in on interviews for his request as well as strip materials from the Harpies. He decided to just quickly get rid of all the people in front of him.

Naturally, there was also Galahat's request to not kill any of them and to avoid bone fractures as much as possible.

Rei brought up the Misty Ring's list in his mind and took out the Death Scythe as usual.

The people in the surroundings watched with wide eyes as the large scythe appeared from nowhere.

"It's troublesome to waste time here. Come."

While saying that, he readied his Death Scythe. Naturally, no one stepped towards Rei. No, rather, when the Death Scythe came out, they took some distance to surround him.

".....What's wrong? As expected, are you all just good at talking? Well, it can't be helped since you're all just small fry who are weaker than Goblins. However, then don't pretend to be humans, just go back to your dirty hideouts and tremble."

It was an outright mockery. It was obvious that he was trying to provoke them, but unfortunately, only a few of the adventurers surrounding Rei noticed. The rest of them didn't understand what he was saying at first, but as soon as they realised, their faces went red as they glared at Rei. Still, no one was sure they could gain victory over Rei.

(Just a bit more.)

While watching the situation, Rei started to speak again as Freon and Brazos

gave wry smiles behind him.

"What's wrong? Even with so many people, if you're still scared of me, why don't you just show your true feelings and submit to me? Then I might have some mercy. I might overlook this."

While looking at the people around him, Rei said that with ridicule.

"Don't be stupid you stupid brat! I'll show you what happens when you despise adults, I'll beat that into your body!"

One of the thugs met Rei's look and said that as he charged towards Rei with a knife.

Chapter 153

Taking Rei's provocation, the thug thrust the knife in his hand. As he watched the movements of the thug, Rei gave a sigh in his mind.

(There's no proper movements. He's just trying to stab his knife into the enemy, his actual movements are dull.)

"Slow."

Rei swung the Death Scythe when his pitiful prey came close enough.

However, because he had taken a request from Galahat not to kill them, he struck them with the other side of the blade.

If it was a sword, it would have been fine.

However, the Death Scythe was swung with Rei's strength.....no, it was because it was not a slashing but a blunt weapon that he used all his strength. The attack casually struck against the thug's left foot with a bang.

Crack-!

Like that, the man had his thigh bone broken with an unpleasant sound. It was fortunate that he had his thigh bone crushed and not the more fragile knee bone. With the complex bone structure at the knee, if it had been broken by the Death Scythe.....even if it was treated, it would be questionable whether he would be able to walk like before.

"Gah-! Gaaaaah-! It hurts, it hurts-! Damn. Damn iiiiiiiit-!"

Dropping his knife, the thug fell to the ground and rolled in pain.

Rei looked away from the thug, which was like a rock on the roadside, as he turned to look at the people surrounding him.

"Don't worry. I won't kill you. I have a request for that. However, injuring you and killing you are two different things. Breaking an arm or a leg.....no, only those that are prepared should step forward."

Raising the Death Scythe again, he pointed it towards them with an eerie sound.

[.....]

The thug rolled on the ground while holding his legs and shouting 'It hurts, it hurts' in pain. Everyone looked at the thug and then at Rei with his Death Scythe.

Regarding the number of people they had, they had overwhelmingly more people, so they thought they could finish this request without an issue. But, the result was the man crying in pain in front of them. They didn't want to suffer the same way as well. The feelings of the men around Rei were the same, without doubt.

However, even so, they couldn't run away from here. As a result, the people in the surroundings could only keep their current state. At least, until the higher ranking adventurers in the mansion came to help them.

Although Rei watched silently for a few seconds, he gave a sigh when one came forward and the man who just had his legs broken was still crying out in pain.

"Right now you're too noisy. Shut up."

Saying that, Rei jabbed the handle of the Death Scythe at the man who was rolling on the ground shouting, knocking him out.

"So, how long do you guys plan to watch from the surroundings? I can't spend so much time here. If you don't come to me then I'll go to you."

[.....]

Even though Rei provoked them like that, none of them stepped forward. Did I overdo it on the first guy? Thinking to himself, Rei finished talking and took a step forward. At that moment, a shadow appeared from inside Bolton's mansion.....

"Eeeh-, all you lot are in the way! Move!"

Because of the thugs and low ranking adventurers surrounding Rei, he couldn't move forward and yelled at them to get out the way.

".....Mm?"

Rei tilted his head slightly at that voice.

(That voice, it sounds familiar.....)

As Rei thought about that, he temporarily stopped moving forward as he guessed how the situation would progress and waited for the owner of the voice to step out from the crowd.

A man in his twenties with a rough looking appearance broke through the crowd. He advanced while despising all the people around him.

".....?"

Looking at the face of the man who stepped forward, Rei looked puzzled at the familiar looking face.

Rei didn't know who the person was, but that man was different. Stepping out of the crowd and holding a battle axe in his hands, he spoke with a brutal smile on his lips.

"I've been looking forward to seeing you here, Rei. The humiliation from last time, I will clear it here!"

Voom~, the man swung his battle axe. You could see the power behind it just from that swing. It was to that extent. At the very least, it was not a sound that could be made by low rank adventurers.

(But.....where have we met? If he knows me and hates me so much, was he involved with something I did?)

Thinking in his mind, Rei tried to recall the face of the man before him.....anyhow, he only had his appearance to go by. The number of people that had tried to mess with him was quite a few and Rei wasn't kind enough to remember all the faces of people he didn't care about.

Because of that, these were the next words he spoke.

".....Sorry, but I can't remember who you are. Could you tell me your name? Maybe I might remember if you tell me your name."

Naturally, Rei's remarks basically meant that man was not worth

remembering, making his face go red in anger.

"Hey, could it be....."

"Ah. It's Vargas who led Claws of the Hawk. They got crushed by Rei in front of everyone."

(.....Ah, that reminds me, that did happen.)

Hearing the mutters in the surroundings, Rei finally remembered who the person before him was.

"Sorry, I remember now. That's right. You're the one who leads Goblin Drool. The Power Axe which I got from out bet was a pretty high quality item."

"Don't joke around! That, that was a magic item I got after desperately diving into a dungeon! You took it away all of a sudden....."

Vargas shouted out in an angry voice, or rather a roar. But Rei just replied with a sigh.

"In the first place it was because you messed with me. Don't you know the saying, getting what you deserve?"

".....All this talk is fine. But the Power Axe you took from me? I will take it back today."

At those words, Rei averted his eyes slightly.

"Ah, sorry. About that axe, there was some circumstances and I gave it to party member in a temporary party I was in.No, rather, I sold it."

"What-! You, do you know the value of the Power Axe when you said that?"

"Ahh. Don't worry. Their talent with the axe was much greater than yours. Even as a magic item, it would be happier with someone who could master it."

"D-D-D.....Don't joke around!"

Vargas raised his voice, swinging his axe as he closed in on Rei. As expected of a D rank adventurer. Compared to the thug who had attacked with a knife earlier, everything was different, both in speed and body movements. The disadvantage was that the aim of his self taught attack was easy to see, while its advantage was in its power.

The attack seemed to be impossible for an ordinary D rank adventurer to block. In strength alone, Vargas was said to be equal to that of C rank.

However.....Vargas' misfortune was to make an enemy out of Rei.

"Not good enough."

Blocking the axe that was swung down at his left shoulder with the handle of the Death Scythe.

Gakin~, a metallic sound echoed into the surroundings. The people around them saw Vargas swing the axe down with both hands while Rei blocked using the Death Scythe with one hand. The fact that Rei hadn't moved a single step even after blocking Vargas' strike gave the surrounding people a terrifying impression.

"Hey, that's not a lie right? It's an attack from Vargas-san you know? He stopped it with one hand."

".....Isn't Vargas just weak?"

"You idiot, don't you know about Vargas!?"

"No, I'm not an adventurer."

"Seriously, this is why.....okay, listen carefully. Speaking of just skill, Vargas could be called C rank. However, because of various issues with his personality, he's still rank D.Because of this, the rumors that Rei had overwhelmed the Claws of the Hawk by himself might be true."

Hearing the voices of the adventurer and thug talking near him, Rei turned towards Vargas, who was desperately pushing the axe down with both hands.

Pressing down with the axe with all the strength he had, even though he was using both arms, Rei blocked it with just one and with no change in expression. Although it was an bad situation, there was still no sense of dismay in Vargas' expression. Rather, he was aware of the difference in their abilities, had settled his anger and calmed down.

(It's strange. The last time I saw him, he was a person who easily let his blood rush to his head.)

While thinking to himself, Rei slowly pushed forward with the Death Scythe against the axe.

"D-D-Damn it! But you know-!"

Vargas must have known that lose in pure strength if he didn't do something.

Pushing away the handle of the Death Scythe away with his axe, he leapt back. And.....

"Now-!"

As soon as he moved away from Rei, he gave a shout. At the same time, the sound of something cutting through the air at night could be heard.

"Tch, petty tricks."

Hearing the sound in the air, Rei poured magic power into the Death Scythe as he swung it.

Kin~!

The sound of metal scraping against each other was heard and the next moment, an arrow near Rei was split in two right down the shaft.

".....That was extremely underhanded. Was that the reason for your calmness?"

At Rei's scornful eyes, Vargas smiled, as if convinced of his advantage even though his trump card had been dealt with easily.

"Heh, you're really a monster. But you can't cut every arrow that flies towards you. In addition....."

Vargas glanced towards Galahat.

"I heard. You, I heard your injury hasn't healed yet. Can you dodge arrows like that?"

".....Hostages, is it."

Rei gently rubbed his eyebrows. However, in the present situation, taking Galahat hostage with his dulled movements was a valid tactic. Rei didn't know how many archers there were. If it was just a single person, Rei could deal with it, but it was hard to say if there were multiple archers and he had to defend a person.

"I won't make it so easy to get to Galahat-san!"

Murt shouted, but actually, he was the weakest in the group. As long as Murt was dealt with, the probability that Galahat would have to move to protect

himself would be high. In fact, there was no doubt that his injuries would suffer from adverse effects if he did that.

Knowing that, Vargas spoke lightly of Murt.

"Heh, whatever small fry like you does, the result won't change.Rei, don't you understand the situation? Let me chop you up quietly."

Although Vargas had convinced himself that victory was just a step away.....

"Your execution is poor, idiot."

Saying that, Rei swung the Death Scythe in the direction the arrow had come from.

"Flying Slash!"

The swing of the Death Scythe produced a slash that flew through the air..... hitting the branches of a tree growing in the garden of the mansion. The next moment, the branch was cut and a man fell towards the ground while holding on to the branch and screaming.

"There, Flying Slash!"

A Flying Slash was released again. This one went towards a window on the second floor of Bolton's mansion. It cut a slit in the window and the walls, literally slashing through it rather than breaking it, blasting away the archer at the window.

"What!?"

Vargas raised a voice of astonishment at Rei's consecutive Flying Slashes. He must have thought Rei had any long range attacks. However, he immediately turned his eyes towards the mansion with a smile as he gave a short shout.

"Shoot!"

An arrow left the mansion at Vargas' signal. That's right, there weren't just the two hidden archers dealt with by Rei. There was still one more. One of the few remaining C rank adventurers in the mansion. Vargas didn't know, but it was the adventurer who had shot arrows at Murt as he was running away through the back streets.

(It's your mistake that you couldn't see it!)

As he gave a cheer in his mind, Vargas gave a smile in victory.....when he saw the figure of a Griffon intercepting the arrow with his claws. And.....without noticing, Rei had moved up to him with the Death Scythe raised.

The next moment, a thud was heard and Vargas consciousness faded away from the impact of the attack.

Chapter 154

The front of Bolton's mansion was now wrapped in silence.

The thugs and low ranked adventurers that surrounded Rei had no words to describe what they had seen.

As soon as Rei had swung his large scythe, a slash had flown out, cutting the branches of a large tree and dropping the archer that was hiding there. With the reverse swing, he had then sent another slash that flew towards a window on the second floor where another archer was. In the end, Vargas, who was a big man, was unexpectedly blasted away by Rei's Death Scythe, destroying the mansion door as he smashed into it.

[.....]

If anything, the series of developments was too rapid and they couldn't say anything as they looked towards Rei.

Still, even though Set had blocked the arrow for Galahat with his claws, it was hardly noticed because Rei's actions were too flashy.

Even the person who had shot the arrow at the end decided that there was no point to arrow attacks, and though unhappy, disappeared in case he was hit by a Flying Slash like the other two.

While such silence wrapped around the surroundings, Rei swung the Death Scythe onto his shoulder and glanced at the people surrounding him.

"Well then, you were relying on Vargas but he's down now.....what are you going to do? If any of you feel motivated, step forward."

Even though he declared that, seeing that brutal attack, no one wanted to step out.

Some people looked towards Vargas, who had been blasted away. Until a few minutes ago, Vargas had been wearing a metal armour. But it was now crushed and he was unconscious after smashing into the doors of the mansion.

If he was still conscious, he would have experience the suffering of hell with his rib fractures.

Even in Bolton's mansion, Vargas was already one of the adventurers with better skills. Yet he was defeated easily. It had the effect of sapping the morale of the people still here.

"What's wrong? You were yelling at me so energetically just before. Show me your strength. Didn't you say it was common sense for us to run away since you had so many people?"

[.....]

Now that they had seen Rei's overwhelming strength, they couldn't say anything. If they said something, they knew that it would taken as an act of hostility and would follow the same fate as Vargas.

"Really, you're all small fry. When you grouped together, you immediately thought you could become more aggressive.Well, fine then. Go and disperse."

[.....]

Rei told them that, but if they ran away from here, they wouldn't be able to stay in Azoth Firm.

However, their non-committal attitude made Rei frustrated.

"After this, we'll be going inside Bolton's mansion. If you say you won't permit it, then stand in front of me. In that case, I will consider you an enemy and will eliminate you. If you don't want that to happen, then run as fast as you can with your tail between your legs.Here I come."

Behind him were, Freon, Brazos, Galahat and Murt. Rei called out to Set and stepped forward. Naturally, the Death Scythe was on his shoulder, ready to be swung at any time.

Every time Rei took a step forward, the people surrounding them took a step back. Such a situation continued until eventually, Rei arrived at the front of the gate without having to do anything. That said, the gate had already been forced apart when Vargas was blasted through it.

At the gate were Sakant and Fader. The two gatekeepers stayed in place,

holding their spears.

"Move aside."

Rei gave a short order. Hearing that, Fader trembled for a moment and turned to look at his partner, Sakant. Sakant had a pale face, but his expression didn't change.

"H-Hey, Sakant."

Seeing that, Fader called out unintentionally. Seeing the series of events with Vargas, it was obvious that Rei was someone they couldn't handle by themselves. Fader was asking why Sakant still stood there given that.

"It's because up to now, I have been hired here. That is what I feel.Fader, you don't have to follow me, do as you like."

".....Ahh, damn it! Damn it! Saying that and telling me I can leave like this!"

Fader shouted at his partner's unexpected words and pointed the tip of his own spear towards Rei.

"You don't have to follow me.You really are stupid."

"Shut up! I don't have to be told I'm stupid. Seriously, why bother doing something like this....."

Seeing the two of them point their spears at him while arguing, Rei smiled for a moment before it quickly disappeared.

"You're acting against me. I can take that as such right?"

"OHHHHHHH-!"

Rei's question was answered with a shout. It was a courageous shout instead of words to erase their fear as Sakant and Fader thrust their spears towards Rei's body. As expected of two people who guarded the gate, their coordination was very good. Sakant thrust first while Fader thrust at the place Rei would have to move to dodge or block the spear. It was a kind of delayed attack.

It would have been effective on ordinary people. However, that was Sakant and Fader's largest miscalculation. Their opponent was Rei.

"This is fine.....right!"

Catching Sakant's spear with the Death Scythe, he used the blade to cut off

it's tip before flicking his wrist to quickly move the Death Scythe, parrying Fader's spear with the handle.

"Gah-!"

Fader gave a cry of pain at the unexpected power in the parry. Sakant's spear wasn't damaged but it's tip had been cleanly cut off. With the the overwhelming weight of the Death Scythe's handle, Fader's spear had been knocked out of his hands by Rei. He couldn't handle the shock and was forced to open his hands, launching the spear far off to the right.

"....."

Sakant had a stunned look when he saw Rei instantly cut his spear and parry the other.

While receiving that look, Rei picked up Fader's spear, which had fallen down, and stabbed into the ground.

Zugon~ There was a sound that shouldn't happen when a spear was pierced into the ground. Including the spear tip and handle, the spear went 50cm into the ground.

"That's enough already. You have no way to stop us. Move aside."

".....Please. Even I don't want to injure you. Move aside quietly."

Galahat's words leaked out after Rei's words. Sakant heard them but still took a step forward.....

"Sakant, it will be okay. We've fulfilled our role well enough."

At Fader's words, Sakant stopped

"....."

"You know what? Bolton-san was already hard pressed by Rei before. Even so, he still challenged him, we've played our role as gatekeepers well enough"

".....That's right."

At Fader's words, Sakant replied with a small sigh.

"I understand, Galahat-san.Please enter."

"Sorry about this. However, you don't need to worry, nothing bad will happen to you."

Galahat nodded as if to comfort Sakant and Fader as they walked through the gate between the two.

"Please wait for Galahat-san. Right now, Galahat-san isn't in his best condition!"

As Murt said that, Rei, Freon and Brazos followed after.

As they left, the thugs and low ranking adventurers who had surrounded them just earlier were silent.

"What to say, that was, wow.....the door's gone."

The entrance to Bolton's mansion was about 10m from the gate. The door that was supposed to be there had been cleanly demolished when Vargas had been smashed into it by Rei's attack.

With the door destroyed, they entered the entrance hall of the mansion. Vargas had collapsed on the floor unconscious.

"Well, there might be a trap in the door.....wouldn't it be nice if everything was fine?"

Rei said that as Freon looked at the unconscious Vargas in amazement.

To Freon, Vargas had fought Rei before and should have know his ability. Even so, without learning from his experience, he challenged Rei again. Even though he challenged Rei to a rematch after training himself, he still used snipers with bows from long range. They were not targeted at Rei either but towards the injured Galahat to hold him hostage. Freon could see the result.

That was the same for Brazos. Turning to look at Vargas for a moment, who had collapsed on the floor, he gave a snort before looking somewhere else.

To begin with, they had seen part of Rei's ability during the Harpy subjugation. In ranks C and D, they didn't believe there was anyone who could defeat Rei even if they attacked him in a group. It was possible to fight an endless war of attrition.....but even so, as far as Rei's abilities were concerned, he could probably just sweep them away with fire magic.

"Gurururu~"

The last to enter the entrance hall was Set, who looked around as he gave a

cry.

Normally, as a Griffon, Set would never enter the mansion. But this time, they were going to fight the adventurers hired by Bolton, so no one was going to complain about it. Even Galahat, who had the closest feelings about the mansion, could not exclude him and had no choice but to welcome Set in because of his combat strength.

"Even so, it's quite lonely that no one is here greet you."

Brazos looked around the entrance hall with his Earthshaker Hammer on his shoulder, but there was no one in sight.

"That is.....are they concentrating their forces to wait for us?"

Freon muttered while reading to swing the sword at her waist at any time.

"I wonder. With Rei, they are at a disadvantage in strength so they will probably gather their forces to a single location to try to break the current situation.Speaking of my older brother, that's definitely like him."

"In that case, where do you think he's gathered his forces? Most of them are at the front of the mansion, we've already cleared some of them out to some extent before coming here as well. There shouldn't be many left in terms of numbers."

"Ahh, that's quite reasonable for Rei to say.They're probably in the room where Rei met my older brother. The neighbouring or opposite rooms are also a possibility. There should be several rooms over there aside from my older brother's office.No, that's not right."

Galahat rejected his own words. He looked around while thinking about something.....and then spoke again.

"It's true that my older brother's office is the most likely, but it would be too narrow for adventurers to fight there. Even if they could, my older brother would be uneasy with their ability to protect him. In that case....."

Muttering, Galahat turned to look towards the second floor.

"What's on the second floor?"

"It's a kind of dance hall. My older brother often invited over his acquaintances for parties, it would be used then."

"I see. The dance hall, is reasonably wide.For example, can adventurers fight there."

Listening into the conversation between Brazos and Galahat, Freon muttered in understanding.

"Ah. It's the largest room in the mansion. Of course, there's still a possibility that my older brother has placed his own safety as the highest priority and barricaded himself in his office."

"Well, any how, it would be stupid to rush straight ahead without checking his office only to be attacked from behind. If it's not a hassle, should we check anyway?"

".....No, it seems that won't be necessary."

Rei's words interrupted Freon. He caught the shadow near the entrance to the dance hall on the second floor.

And that person drew back their bow.....

"Haah!"

The moment the arrow was released, Rei was already one step ahead, swinging the Death Scythe. The blade of the Death Scythe was like a flash of light, easily slicing the arrow that was aimed at Galahat.

"As you can see, we have an invitation. I don't want to have to break up the mansion more than needed."

Rei said that as he watched the person who shot the arrow enter into the dance hall behind him.

Chapter 155

"Now then, if we open this door, it will start the climax to this ridiculous uproar. Are you ready?"

The dance hall on the second floor of Bolton's mansion. Rei muttered, standing in front of the large door.

"I don't have any issues. I want to settle this uproar faster so that I can take my time drinking."

"I'm ready at anytime as well of course. Seriously, I've already decided to follow through with this stupid uproar. "

"I'm sorry. You got rolled up in my family issues."

Galahat bowed his head to Freon, who was complaining with a sigh.

"Well, it's not your fault. In the first place, Azoth Firm.....no, Bolton, made an absurd demand to Rei."

At Galahat's words, Freon continued speaking hurriedly.

"Leave Galahat-san's escort to me. However, don't expect me to be able to do much in a fight."

Murt said that as he held his halberd

"Gurururu~"

Because it was a staircase for humans, Set flew directly to the second floor with his wings and gave a cry.

Giving a wry smile towards his companions, who had no sense of tension, Rei tore the doors to the dance hall wide open.....the next moment, he sensed something flying towards him and swung the Death Scythe in reflex.

Kin~, the dagger gave a metallic sound as it was blocked.

"Wow, seriously. Cutting right through the door and blocking my dagger."

An astonished voice was heard.

As the voice said, Rei had swung his Death Scythe, tearing through the door to the dance hall and blocking the dagger that was thrown at him. What was surprising was how Rei had cut through the door and blocked the dagger in a single attack. That said, to Rei, doors and walls were not something that could be considered an obstacle.

It might be said that Rei's power wasn't something expected by the people waiting in the dance hall. Brazos and Freon already understood that Rei was someone outside the standard. It wasn't too surprising to Galahat and Murt either, who had been watching when Rei had met Bolton. Because of that, they all entered the dance hall without saying anything in particular.....

"H-Hiii-!"

One of the people who had been waiting for Rei was a middle aged woman in her thirties or forties, who looked like a mage as she held a cane in her hands and wore a robe. She suddenly screamed and stepped back.

"....."

This person, what was she doing. Thinking the same thing, her companions turned away from Rei to look at her. The female mage felt that there was an absolute predator in front of her, she looked towards Rei with a fearful gaze, as if looking at a predator.

(.....Ah.)

Seeing the female mage, Rei thought that she might have seen his magic power.

"It seems we won't have to worry about the mage. In that case, who's left....."

Rei immediately lost interest in the middle aged mage and turned towards the other adventurers who had been waiting in the dance hall.

There was a male thief, who had thrown the dagger earlier, a swordsman wearing leather armour made from monster skin, two spearmen in metal armour and another man who could be considered a heavy knight, wearing full plate armour and wielding a halberd. There was also an archer with a bow. A total of 6 people.

"Brazos, Freon, Galahat. Among the ones you know, is there anyone we should watch out for?"

Reaching the Death Scythe, Rei asked Brazos and the others while observing their opponents.

Freon and Brazos were experienced enough to be considered veterans in the city of Gilm. And with high rank of rank B, Galahat had formerly been coworkers with the adventurers in Azoth Firm.

It was Freon who spoke up first.

"The swordsman and the two spearmen look familiar. Wolf of the Snowy Fields is a party that should have ranked up to rank C recently. Although their rank up is recent, they are talented so be careful."

Galahat spoke, following on from Freon's words.

"The male thief who threw the dagger is the person who manages the thieves hired by Azoth Firm. If I remember correctly, his name was Tenda."

"The archer is the person who targeted me when I was looking for Rei in the back streets. Possibly, he might be the archer that Rei didn't attack when we were at the front of the mansion."

Murt said that as everyone else stayed quiet.

"Who's the man in full plate? From what I felt, he seems to be the most skilled."

In Rei's sight was the heavy knight holding a halberd. The movement of the others was good but Rei felt that that man had an aura several levels above the other adventurers.

".....No, I don't know. If there were any unusual adventurers wearing full plate, it would spread around immediately."

Anyhow, adventurers had to move around to do requests with their own strengths. During that time, if an adventurer showed up wearing full plate, which weighed 10's of kilograms, rumors would spread fast. But Brazos and Freon did not recall hearing rumors of such a strange adventurer.

(Well, there are also some strange adventurers who wield large scythes taller

than themselves. But I didn't think that there would be many adventurers wearing full plate mail.)

While thinking to himself, Brazos looked towards Galahat.

"Do you remember anything? Since you were coworkers, people who stand out should be talked about right?"

Even though he was asked, Galahat shook his head slightly.

"I don't remember. I think that if he was as conspicuous as he is, I would not forget seeing himin that case, was he hired in a hurry in the past few days that I was out? Murt, you know?"

"No, I don't recognise him."

"Hey, hey, hey, hey, how come you're just talking among yourselves here? We've been waiting here all day you know? At least let me have some fun with the Griffon from the rumors.....yo-!"

Saying that, Tenda, who led the thieves in Azoth Firm, dashed forward with a dagger in both hands, quickly closing the distance.

"Well then, I'll deal with the thief first. You all hold on until I finish with him! Set, deal with the archer! Murt, guard Galahat. Guard your position!"

Holding up the Death Scythe to intercept the thief coming towards him, Rei called out to Brazos, Freon, Murt and Set. Rei didn't wait for Tenda and went forward.

"Haha-! Something that long is useless when the distance closes! You're an interesting guy as the rumors said!"

Fierce.....Tenda attacked Rei with his daggers, feinting from side to side with an amused smile.

(I see, is he the type of person that Galahat mentioned in the hideout that loves to fight?)

Thinking to himself, Rei watched his distance and timing as their fight started.

Guessing left or right. If Rei thought it would be below, Tenda would unexpectedly attack from above. An ordinary person would be at the mercy of the feints. However, his opponent was a bad match up this time.

"Haah!"

In any case, Rei's large 2m long scythe was swung side to side and up and down as if it was a branch of a dead tree. Even if Tenda threw in some feints, it was easy to work around them as the Death Scythe was a magic item which had the effect of letting Rei wield it without feeling its weight as long as it sensed his magic power.

"Well, you're certainly a monster as rumored, this is."

In the first 10 seconds, he had a smell of a hunter seeing a responsive prey. In the next 10 seconds, he realised that his opponent was unexpectedly tough and switched his mode from playing around to attacking seriously. Another 10 seconds later, even if he attacked, his daggers couldn't hit anything. He was surprised that Rei could dodge everything.

Even if Rei had little opportunities to fight someone using daggers as weapons, concentrating on reading Tenda's motion to avoid his attacks. Before long, Rei took a sharp breath and made a big swing.

"Fu~!"

"-!? Tch!"

Tenda had received several attacks from the Death Scythe so far and understood the toughness of the weapon as well as Rei's monstrous strength as he suddenly crouched.

(Certainly, your attack has tremendous power. However, there's no point to an attack if it doesn't hit anything! My daggers will apply paralysis poison on your legs if you swing and miss.....)

Yes. Tenda was going to attack Rei's legs as soon as Rei's attack passed over him. Although Rei was covered in a robe which seemed to have some sort of magic effect, with his skill, he could cut through the robe just to leave a scratch on Rei's legs.

This was certainly a valid strategy.However, that was under the assumption that his opponent wasn't Rei.

At this point, Tenda had made two mistakes. First of all, Rei's robe was definitely a magic item, but he didn't know what it was. It was made from two

layers of dragon skin from dragons that had lived for several hundred years. Dragon scales were also placed in between the two layers of dragon skin. It boasted an overwhelming defensive power, even compared to full plate mail. Even if Tenda tried to stab his dagger into Rei's legs, the tip would never pierce through the Dragon Robe.

Then there was his biggest mistake. That was to underestimate Rei's physical ability. In the end, Tenda was a C rank adventurer. However, he took pride that his skill had reached the B rank level. Even if he fought against Galahat, a B rank adventurer, he was strong enough to fight on equal terms. But even though he was that skilled, he was still C rank. Honestly, it was because Azoth Firm told him that he would stand out too much if there was a B rank adventurer other than Galahat. In particular, Tenda held the position of the leader of Azoth Firm's thieves and often had to do a variety of dirty jobs. For that reason, he was requested that he shouldn't draw too much attention to himself. He remained at C rank in exchange for a huge reward each month.

That confidence slowed Tenda's judgment. The Death Scythe made a whoosh sound as it swept through the air above the crouching Tenda.....the next moment, as he tried to stab his daggers, smeared with paralysis poison, into Rei's legs, Tenda's consciousness sank into darkness as a strong impact hit his side.

"Your target was good.....but."

Rei didn't do anything complicated. All he did was to quickly change the direction he swung the Death Scythe as it passed over Tenda's head.

Normally, for someone using something as long as the Death Scythe, it was a movement that followed an impossible trajectory. It was the effect of the Death Scythe as a magic item, reducing its weight to a pair of chopsticks, that allowed this unique attack to be made.

Blasted about 10m away, Rei briefly glanced at Tenda, who had collapsed and fainted due to the shock and pain from his broken left ribs before checking the fights everyone else was in. The male archer had already been taken to ground by Set and was in a state where he couldn't move with Set's right foreleg on his back.

(As expected, even if he's an able archer, he can't take on Set.)

Rei gave a wry smile.

In fact, the male archer had shot several arrows as Set flew around, fully utilising the size of the dance hall. However, most of them were evaded or blocked with his claws. The moment he tried to pull back his bowstring to shoot another arrow, he had the terrible experience of being tripped by Set's tail while being attacked by Set's beak. He was now in a state where he couldn't move because Set's right foreleg was on top of him.

Next, he turned to look at Freon and Brazos.

Although they were at a disadvantage in terms of numbers, they were still two veteran C rank adventurers who had weapons advantageous against spears. The swordsman acted as the front line for his other two party members in close combat.

The two sword wielders clashed. The sword of the swordsman from Wolf of the Snowy Fields was parried by Freon's sword. Freon tried to seize the opportunity to attack his torso but was blocked by a spear. Brazos' Earthshaker Hammer smashed against the spear targeting Freon as another spear stabbed out towards Brazos.

As far as Rei could see, they were in an almost equal stalemate.

(.....They equally matched? Wait.)

Rei recounted the number of enemies that had been waiting for them and looked around the dance hall again.

The middle aged woman who had sensed Rei's enormous magic power was still mumbling incomprehensible words, unable to get up.

(That mage will not be a problem for the time being.)

Thinking to himself, Rei looked away from the woman.....

"....."

Rei matched looks with the man holding the halberd, who stayed silent as he looked at Rei.

No. Naturally, he was wearing a helmet that was hiding his whole face, so Rei didn't know if he was looking back at him. However, Rei instinctively felt that he was looking back.

The man looked around to check that no one could interfere in his fight with Rei. Confirming that, he swung his halberd.

Roar-!

The noise from the wind was quieter than when Rei swung the Death Scythe. But that was still incredible for an adventurer.....in addition, it wasn't a sound that could be made by the adventurers under C rank hired by Azoth Firm.

"....."

Holding his halberd silently, he took a step towards Rei. Slowly, he took a second step, followed by a third. Steadily closing the distance to Rei.

Chapter 156

The dance hall on the second floor of Bolton's mansion located in the upper class district. The development of the battle that was happening there could be said to be gradually leaning towards Rei's side.

First, out of the party that laid in wait for Rei and others, the middle-aged woman—their sole mage—had lost all her fighting spirit the moment she saw Rei and sank down to the floor just like that.

And of course, Set seemed too much to handle for the archer. The archer, who had aimed for Murt on many occasions, was now collapsed on the floor with Set's forelegs pushed on his back, becoming completely immobilised.

And like that, the only remaining people capable of fighting on Azoth's side were the three from the C ranked party Snow Field Wolves that were now fighting with Freon and Brazos. And also...

"..."

The man with a halberd, who was silently approaching Rei while setting up his weapon.

(As expected, this guy is quite skilled. I heard the only B ranked adventurer they had was Galahat...but it seems they had quite a few unexpected individuals, be it the thief Tenda, or this guy. Well, neither Galahat nor Murt remembered this halberd guy, so I guess there's no point in dwelling on it.)

While observing the approaching opponent, Rei once again set up his Death Scythe and took a step forward.

They both proceeded to shorten the distance between them...

"...!?"

"Haah!"

As they entered each other's attack range, they swung their weapons. Rei, his Death Scythe, and the man – his halberd.

Whoosh!

The long weapons they swung tore through the air as they approached each other...

And then, they clashed, sending a high-pitched metallic sound around them. And it was not just once or twice. The sound repeated many times.

The halberd's axe head and the Death Scythe's giant blade clashed again and again, repelling each other.

From the shock that travelled to his hands, Rei revealed a slightly surprised expression.

(Although I'm still not putting a lot amount of magic power in it, he actually has a weapon that can exchange blows with the Death Scythe upfront? Could it be a Magic Item!?)

But Rei wasn't the only one who showed surprise. It was the same for his opponent. He didn't expect for there to be a weapon that could exchange blows with himself, who had gone through countless battles so far, continuing on undefeated through them all. And above all, with his most trusty halberd in the world. Indeed—with his halberd—a Magic Item made by the alchemist that was even called a legend.

"..."

Directing a gaze full of wonder at Rei, the man temporarily withdrew his halberd and took some distance.

Normally, in a case like this Rei would to pursue him, but being vigilant of the halberd that could fight evenly with his Death Scythe, Rei decided to let him go.

(Freon and Brazos are currently holding their own but the difference in numbers will show its effect sooner or later. They've been acting non-stop for the whole day, after all. As long as their physical ability or something else isn't inhuman level like me, their stamina should be taking its toll sometime soon. When that happens, either Set will knock out the Archer and back them up or I'll go myself after defeating this man with the halberd.)

Even as he pondered about various things, Rei didn't let that man out of his

sight even for a second.

Despite staring silently at each other, they were both looking for gaps in each other's defences. Deciding to progress things, Rei put some strength in the hand that was holding the Death Scythe, took a half step forward, and even turned his gaze away to intentionally create an opening.

But the man confronting him was very well accustomed to fighting personal battles. He didn't take any bait Rei threw at him and instead started using many similar feints, luring for an attack.

They stood there trying to find each others' openings for several minutes. Thinking that Freon and Brazos, whose stamina were probably close to running dry, would be the ones to gradually fall into a disadvantage if neither of them made a move like this, Rei used a move that his opponent wouldn't expect in order to make things move..

"Magic Shield."

It was one of the acquired skills of the Death Scythe that could manifest a magic shield that could defend against any kind of attack, albeit only once.

"Haah!"

While the man was surprised due to the sudden appearance of a light shield near Rei, he used that momentary gap and kicked the ground, brandishing his Death Scythe, and shortened the distance between them to get him inside his attack range. And without change, he invoked yet another skill of the Death Scythe to release his next move.

"Wind Hand!"

Brandished Death Scythe's handle, an invisible tentacle was produced from the tip.

Although he understood that something was going on due to Rei's words, it seems he was still unable to instantly grasp the existence of the invisible wind tentacle as he hastily checked the surroundings with his helmet-covered face. But he was unable to find anything in the end, so deciding it was just a bluff he set up the halberd to receive Rei's swinging Death Scythe.

"Haah!"

Rei swung down the Death Scythe along with sharp voice. But when the man, too, took a step forward to defend against the Death Scythe before it could reach its maximum power...

"There!"

"...!?"

Manipulating the wind hand, Rei trapped his right ankle in place with its tip as he was about to step forward. And at the same time.

"Power Slash!"

He released the final skill as if to settle everything with it.

It was released towards the man who had his right foot trapped by the Wind Hand and couldn't move. Power Slash was a skill with an effect of blunting the blade's sharpness in exchange for raising the power of the attack. However, that was fine right now. After all, he had been asked by Galahat to try not to kill the enemies where possible. The other side of the blade of the Death Scythe, or back of the blade in sword terms, headed straight towards the man.

"...!?"

Even if his right leg was seized by the wind tentacle, the Wind Hand's level was still just 1. If its level had been higher, it might've kept the man's ankle caught, however, despite being momentarily caught off guard, the man broke free from the Wind Hand with brute force the moment he realized his right ankle was being sealed by some kind of movement, and without stopping, swung his halberd towards Rei.

He went for a mutual strike as the final means after judging that he couldn't come out unscathed from Rei's attack no matter what he did. However...

(I could see that coming a mile away.)

Muttering that deep down, Rei showed a big smirk while swinging his Death Scythe without paying any mind to the halberd that was coming his way.

Just as the halberd, aiming for his head, was about to reach its mark...

The shield of light that floated around Rei stopped the attack while giving off

a metallic sound and then disappeared like mist after serving its duty. At the same time, the Death Scythe was driven into the side of the full plate mail as if getting sucked in.

The Death Scythe exceeding 100 kg, coupled with Rei's own inhuman strength. And that blow which was powered by the Death Scythe's skill, Power Slash, gave off a thick sound as it easily smashed the torso of his full plate mail, blowing him away.

"Guaah!"

The first voice he let out ever since coming to this room, was a voice of anguish to endure the pain and shock.

"Okay, I'm finished here... what?"

If one received the current attack, they should have fainted in all probability. Judging that to be the case, Rei faced towards Freon and Brazos, however, the sounds he heard behind made him instinctively turn around in pure amazement. Tenda who received a normal blow to the flank had fainted on the spot. And yet, Rei couldn't believe that the man was still holding on to his consciousness even after receiving a blow that employed the Power Slash. Of course, Tenda wore a leather armour suitable for a thief, focusing more on mobility rather than defence. It couldn't be compared to the full plate mail in terms of defence, but even so, it was a blow made with Power Slash. As long as it wasn't a Magic Item, be it a leather armour or a full plate mail, their defence powers should've been within the margin of error.

"Are you really a human? No, well, judging from that sturdiness, you don't seem like a normal human... That said, you are too tall for a Dwarf, and Elves should be physically weaker than humans, to begin with. Or perhaps you are from a race of Demi-humans that I'm not aware of..."

Rei asked while facing the man who still stood up to his feet, although his movements were somewhat duller, however just like before the man didn't say a word and merely set up the halberd.

(It would be easy if I could just kill him, but it's a pain that I'm prohibited to do that. With that being the case, I should break one or two of his limbs... Wait, judging from the previous reaction, most of his ribs are definitely broken. So I'm

not so sure it would be of any use if I were to break his limbs at this point... Wait. His movements...)

Not even a minute had passed since he stood up, but his movements were certainly becoming smoother. So much in fact that it was just like before he received the injury.

(Just like before he got hurt?)

A thought flashed through Rei's mind, but the man raised his halberd and rushed towards him as if he didn't want to even give him time to think.

His movements didn't look anything like how someone with broken ribs would move.

(Ah!? I see, so it's a Magic Item with constant recovery effect just like the [Love of Shizukuishi] that Set is wearing, huh!)

Even among the countless Magic Items, this was a particularly rare kind. For that reason, it took Rei quite a bit of time before coming up with that possibility, and as if aiming for that opening the man swung his halberd. He mowed down with the axe of the halberd, thrust with its spear, and sent strikes at him with the spike protruding from behind the axe. Rei repelled those waves of attacks with the blade of the Death Scythe, or warded them off by parrying with the handle.

There were people who observed their fight, that was just like the repeat of their previous exchange.

They were Galahat and his escort, Murt, who stood near the dance hall entrance. Seeing their movements that were like a blade dance—no, like a dance performance—impossible for C or D rankers to achieve, they could do nothing but stand in pure awe.

Be it the Death Scythe or the halberd, both of their attacks were sharp and fast. And above all, the overwhelming power behind those attacks was clear as a day; it was enough to make them believe that getting hit by a single one of those would undoubtedly spell their doom.

(That man is a halberd user...like me? The difference between our ability is like day and night.)

Murt was overwhelmed deep down, instinctively realising the difference of skill between himself and the man that was fighting with Rei.

Murt naturally wanted Rei to win. But after all, the opponent was the user of the same weapon as him. So in the end, he ended up supporting the opponent.

However, such performance of theirs didn't last long, and soon enough it started to head towards the conclusion.

The first one to notice that, as expected, wasn't Murt but Galahat whose rank was higher and had more battle experience.

"...He won, huh."

"Eh?"

Without thinking, Murt questioned Galahat's words. It was indeed a battle that he had trouble following even from this distance, however, from his viewpoint they still seemed to be on even ground. And despite that being the case, why was Galahat certain of Rei's victory? He couldn't figure out that reason by observing them, so he sent a questioning glance at Galahat.

"You don't get it?"

"No. They both seem equal from my perspective."

"Indeed, they do look equal. At present...that is. But take a moment and observe them again. If you do that, you should be able to see what's different."

Hearing Galahat's words, Murt carefully observed the dance of the Death Scythe and the halberd. As he did that, the meaning behind Galahat's words gradually became clear to him.

"Eh? It's not much, but are the man's reactions becoming duller?"

Murt muttered unconsciously. Indeed, from Murt's perspective, it was only a bit. His attacks were fast enough that calling them instantaneous wouldn't be an exaggeration, but it seemed that his reactions were still delayed against Rei's attacks. However, Galahat responded with a little shake of his head to Murt's words.

"Not quite. Well, it's technically correct but not exactly accurate. It's not halberd user's reactions that are becoming delayed, but Rei's who is becoming faster. ...I never expected for his speed to be on yet another level from that

state."

(Or perhaps, the attack from before started to show its effect now...huh?)

Galahat muttered deep down while seeing that the battle was certainly inclining towards Rei...even if only for a bit.

Exactly as he said, before his eyes, Rei's swings of the Death Scythe, slowly—truly little by little—were exceeding the speed of the man's halberd, and although they were light, many cuts started to appear on his full plate mail.

If the situation continued without change, Rei would most probably come out victorious within the next ten minutes. That's what Galahat thought, however the next moment his expectation was proven to be quite off.

As the Death Scythe put a big cut on the man's full plate mail, he started to take a few steps back for some reason.

"...What's the matter?"

Looking at his behaviour, Rei muttered without thinking.

Certainly, the current attack probably gave the man quite a shock, even though it landed on the armour. But even so, it was also true that it wasn't something that would determine the outcome of the battle. And yet, the man who fought with him until a few seconds ago suddenly took a few steps back and continued doing so, widening the distance between them.

No, rather than taking the distance, it was more like he was heading straight towards the back door of the dancehall.

While being puzzled about the man who just gave up on the battle and withdrew without saying a word, he didn't do anything like pursuing him.

(It's difficult to neutralise him without killing as I promised to Galahat, given that he has a Magic Item with automatic recovery effect. If he's retreating himself then that's all the better. ...If he suddenly reappears in the room where Bolton is hiding, I'll just deal with him then. Even so, that man just now was way stronger than a mere B rank. Why was someone with such ability cooperating with the likes of Bolton?)

Although he was puzzled on the inside, the fact was that his hands were now

free, so taking a step forward, he set up the Death Scythe to deal the blow from behind to the Snow Field Wolves that were fighting against Freon and Brazos.

Chapter 157

"...I did hear it from the young miss, but to think he was really someone that skilled."

The man who had been fighting with Rei just a little ago gave a small mutter as he removed his full-face helmet that covered his face.

His face revealed a man in his late thirties. From there, he forcefully removed his smashed up and cracked full plate mail. Finally, his muscle-covered body appeared within, trained to the point that it seemed to be bursting from the chain mail.

"Not to mention that Griffon and his absurd level of magic power. To think such an outstanding individual was laying low in a remote region like this. No, I suppose it's precisely because this is a remote region...huh?"

After completely removing his full plate mail and becoming lightening up, the man took up his halberd – his long-time favourite weapon – in hand and left the mansion while erasing his presence.

"Young miss' eye for judging people isn't bad. Does that mean that even the Duke will have to make his move? However... I don't think a person like Margrave Rowlocks would leave someone this powerful alone. If someone with such combat ability joins the neutral faction, even the Duke won't find it amusing...but with the Bestir Empire's shadow being present, he can't exactly lose himself in the power struggle."

The man muttered.

If Margrave Daska Rowlocks, the feudal lord of this town, was here, the man's identity would've been quickly revealed. Or if it were the nobles who have been stationed in this town, then they would've probably been left wide-eyed no matter if they were from Neutral, Royal or the Nobles Faction.

And the reason for that was that this man was Philma de Giel. Someone who stood at the top of the knight order controlled by Duke Kerebel, a central figure

in the Nobles Faction.

In the first place, why was someone like him here – in a place where he shouldn't have been by all rights? To answer that question, it was because Duke Kerebel had heard about Rei from his daughter Elena. An adventurer whose power was endless, followed by a Griffon – an A ranked monster – and the holder of an unbelievable amount of magic power. Holding the possibility of even attaining the S rank one day. Hearing all that, Duke Kerebel thought that if there was someone that strong hiding there, he wanted to try to get his hands on him no matter what it took. And with such thoughts, he gave an order to Philma who had just returned back after ending the pursuit of Viscount Sails' household. It was to head towards Gilm and confirm the ability of the adventurer called Rei.

Properly speaking, this wasn't a job a knight captain like him had to expressly do. But various factors added up and it was decided that Philma would be the one to go.

It was punishment for being unable to carry out the pursuit of Viscount Sails' family successfully... That was the first reason.

Naturally, Duke Kekebel didn't actually believe that the entirety of Viscount Sails' household, that fled to Bestia Empire, could've been slain with just a single pursuit. So in the end, he merely used that as a pretext, and by doing that, he was able to entrust this mission to the knight captain who couldn't be easily moved in normal conditions.

The second was a more straightforward reason – it was because Philma was the only person whom Duke Kerebel trusted even more than Elena, the General Princess. Of course, it wasn't like there were no people who could see through abilities and aptitudes others. However, most of those were tied by various obligations, and their abilities aside, he couldn't trust them in other aspects.

Therefore, Philma was dispatched towards Gilm, partly for him to take a well-deserved rest. And so he entered the town while hiding his identity, and through his collaborator's connections, he learned that his target was hostile against Azoth Firm. He then ascertained with his own body whether the information Duke Kerebel provided him about Rei's battle ability was true or

not.

"Still, I never thought that his ability would be at least equal to mine. No, he's certainly stronger than me, considering the fact that he was clearly holding back, huh? ...In this case, perhaps young lady deserves praise for seeing through the ability of someone like that. Well, Duke Kerebel wouldn't be so calm about it though."

Although he looked strict, to the end, he just took that attitude for the public eyes. Recalling the face of his lord who loved his daughter dearly, Philma revealed a wry smile. The expression his daughter had on her face when she talked about Rei's personality and ability didn't look anything like the one the General Princess would have. If anything, it looked more like the one a maiden would have when talking about their beloved.

Elena had single-mindedly followed the military path until now without knowing anything about love. Remembering her appearance had brought a faint smile to his face.

But he quickly shook his head a bit and thought back about his fight with Rei while directing his eyes towards the halberd that was his long-lasting partner.

"What's more, it wasn't just his ability. His Scythe seems to be quite a high-level magic item too. After all, it was actually able to exchange blows head on with this Dragon Fang, the work of that legendary alchemist Esta Nord.....No, to even surpass it."

Indeed. The halberd Philma carried was a Magic Item that Esta Nord—renowned as one of the followers of Zepairu and the greatest alchemist of the era of sorcery—had created. It had an effect of consuming the owner's magic power and raising the attack power accordingly. It was a simple enough effect, but its trustworthiness was high. But Rei had sent out series of intense attacks that were practically on par...no, even stronger than his magically strengthened blows, one after another without breaking a sweat.

And so, Philma disappeared through the night town, taking two reports to his lord. The good news that he proved Elena's judgment of him to be true, and the fact that Margrave Rowlocks had an eye on Rei, making his recruitment to their faction extremely difficult.

"Gaah!"

While raising a voice of anguish, the man with a spear – the remaining member of the C Rank party Snow Field Wolves – was blown away and lost his consciousness from the shock as he hit the ground.

"It was more difficult than I imagined."

Rei muttered as he glanced at the fainted trio.

To start with, they barely matched with Freon and Brazos. And with Rei included, it was evident that they stood no chance. However, the Snow Field Wolves members didn't even lend an ear to Brazos' suggestion to surrender. Finally, As Rei joined in, they weren't able to overturn the scales of power, but they continued fighting without change until they all lost consciousness.

"When talking about adventurers hired by Azoth Firm, I thought they'd mostly be some good-for-nothing fellows... but these three sure had some backbone. Though from what I heard about them at the Guild, they didn't give me the impression of being such strong-willed fellows."

Freon muttered while fixing his disordered breathing, and Brazos also nodded as if in complete agreement.

"That's true. But it hasn't been that long since their party ranked up. But well... being in such situation, they probably feared about rumours spreading about them surrendering to the enemy right away."

"I see. Well, if they were gossiped as a party that surrendered to the enemy right after their rank up, they would be taken advantage of in future requests and be looked down by other adventurers, huh."

The swordsman fainted after getting hit in the torso by the Brazos' Earthshaker Hammer. The spearmen were taken out by the blows to their necks by Freon and by Rei's attack with the handle of the Death Scythe. The unluckiest of them was, as expected, or rather, naturally, the spearman who got knocked out by Rei. The spear user who fainted under Freon's attack didn't even suffer any broken bones, and his equipment didn't suffer the damage either. The swordsman did have a few fractured ribs, but his leather armour was made from monster hide and was therefore flexible, meaning that he didn't

suffer much either. Compared to them, the spearman who tasted Rei's blow had his spear snapped in two after using it as a shield in the moment to block the Death Scythe's handle. Without even managing to slow its momentum, the attack also broke his right hand and also smashed his metal armor along with his ribs. He was unmistakably the one who suffered the most, in both medical and financial senses.

"...Hmm? What's wrong?"

Freon who was gazing at the fainted trio suddenly noticed Murt who was glaring at them and Galahat who had a bitter smile on his face.

Murt glared at her he after he realised that he was also included in Freon's last remark about the adventurers hired by Azoth Firm being 'nothing but good-for-nothing fellows'. Galahat revealed a self-deprecating smile for not stopping his brother's deeds until now, even if he held respect for him. But even after seeing that, Freon didn't understand the reason behind their behaviour.

"No, it's nothing. It's indeed true that the adventurers employed by Azoth Firm are mostly good-for-nothing people, including me."

After Galahat said so, Freon finally understood why Murt looked so angry. She looked the other way while scratching her cheek, revealing a dodgy smile.

(Just what is she doing.)

Rei sighed in his mind as he observed their exchange, and then looked around while shouldering his Death Scythe. Tenda who was the first to attack was now lying unconscious with his ribs broken, and the Snow Field Wolves shared the same fate. Also...

"Eek!"

"..."

Rei directed his sight towards the middle-aged female mage and the archer who was still pinned down and immobilised by Set, the only people that were still conscious among the opponents.

And after meeting his gaze, the female mage turned completely frightened and just crawled backwards, unable to put power into her legs to stand up.

(...This one is no good. She's in no state to talk.)

Rei muttered deep down, but it was something that couldn't be helped. Although he had yet to fully master it due to practical issues, Rei's magic power was enormous, to say the least, boasting of both amount and density that surpassed even that of Zepairu who was called a Majin. For that reason, those with the ability to sense magic power or those who could see it like Runo, had been scared many times by the amount of magic power Rei held. And it was the same for that female mage Rei was looking at now, who was frantically retreating with both hands. But her misfortune was the fact that she acted hostile towards Rei. Just what would happen to her if she was hit by magic that utilised the outrageous magic power she could feel coming from Rei. She who felt the difference between their ability as a mage in the literal sense of the word had lost her fighting spirit through and through.

"...She's in that state, so it comes down to having to ask you instead."

Rei directed his gaze towards the archer that was pinned down by Set's right forefoot.

However, the archer simply looked at Rei with a sharp look without uttering a single word.

"Haah. Now that we defeated you people who were supposed to be the trump cards of Azoth Firm, you already understand that you have no chance of winning left, right? In that case, I think it's better for you to cooperate with Galahat right away."

"..."

"What is left of the remaining forces on your side? Do you know whether Bolton is still planning something? How deeply are Azoth Firm's staff involved in this matter?"

"..."

Her asked questions one after another, but the Archer replied with silence to all of them.

"...I don't like this sort of thing, but it can't be helped. Set."

"Gururu"

Set responded with a small cry to Rei's indication and put strength to the

forefoot that was pressing down on the Archer's back.

"!?"

The Archer felt his spine giving off creaking sounds inside from the force pressing down on his back, but still, not a word had spilled from the man's mouth. Rather, he didn't even leak a voice of anguish.

"Rei, it's no use. This guy has the eyes that say he takes pride in his work. He wouldn't do anything that would put his employer at a disadvantage so easily."

Freon muttered with a sigh while looking at the exchange between Rei and the silent archer.

Hearing that, Rei looked towards Brazos and Galahat, but they also shook their heads in silence, implying that getting the information out of him would be impossible.

"...With the increase of the rank, people like that also increase in number, huh?"

Muttering that, he directed his gaze towards the fainted Tenda's direction.

(Though the same goes for battle maniacs like that guy. Although I said 'people like that', It's not strictly in a good sense. If I had to say, I suppose it's better expressed as coming down to the individual?)

Averting his gaze from Tenda, he looked towards Galahat.

"So, what should we do about him? Since he's not being cooperative here, I don't want to leave him like this and get attacked from behind later."

"That's true. ...I'll ask just once more then. You have no intention of cooperating with me, right?"

The archer returned silence to Galahat's question as well.

He stared back towards the gaze directed at him....and finally, Galahat sighed and opened his mouth.

"Rei, please knock him out. When I take over the Azoth Firm that person would be someone I can trust. I don't want to damage our relationship here."

"Got it."

Heaving a sigh, Rei hand-chopped the archer in the back of the neck, knocking him out in the process.

"With this, it seems like the adventurers on brother's side have been mostly wiped out. There might be some left, but there shouldn't be more than few."

Nodding to Galahat's words, Rei and others left the dance hall to head towards the office where Bolton was supposed to be waiting.

"...Brother, it's about time we put an end to this foolishness."

Galahat muttered as he was about to follow after Rei and others, and those words strangely resounded throughout the dance hall where no one was conscious anymore.

Chapter 158

After finishing their battle in the dance hall, Galahat walked through Bolton's mansion.

On the way, they ran into other employed people in the mansion, such as the chef. Fortunately, most of them favoured Galahat over Bolton and nothing major happened.

In actual fact, it was mostly because Galahat had promised to employ them after becoming the representative of Azoth Firm. Otherwise, there probably would have been some of them who would have tried to stop them to score points with Bolton.

".....So then, is Bolton in his office near the room where I met him?"

Rei asked as he walked along with Set. Galahat gave a small nod.

"Ah. There's no doubt about that. In most cases, a room would be prepared as an evacuation location if the mansion is attacked, but my brother has absolute confidence in this mansion. In fact, up until now, no one has ever intruded safely into the mansion."

The largest factor was employing adventurers as guards and converting the fences and walls into magic items to harden the defenses of the surroundings. And even if they could break through, the adventurers stationed in the mansion, including Galahat, a rank B adventurer, were not people they could pass.

"But, that was because Galahat-san was here. In fact, after Bolton decided to cut away Galahat-san and started to increase the security of the mansion, most of them are small fry like me."

"Their level is certainly low. The guys we fought in the dance hall were probably the most elite of them.....seems to be the case."

Although he said that, the man with the halberd was in Rei's thoughts.

(Only that man was an exception. He had overwhelming skill even compared

to Tenda, who was said to have skills equal to B rank. Fortunately, I don't know why, but he watched on at the beginning and it also felt that he wasn't using his full power.....if he had continued fighting, even if I didn't lose, it would have taken a lot longer to settle. The magic item he had that had a constant healing effect was especially troublesome. Although Set has one as well, it's much more troublesome when an enemy has it.)

Set also had a magic item equipped called Love of Shizukuishi, which had a constant healing effect. But since he was originally an A rank monster, he usually wouldn't receive any serious injuries. Because of that, Rei hardly ever noticed its effect.

"Ah, Galahat-san."

Walking through the mansion, a maid came out from a corner. She was a girl in her late teens.

Galahat's face distorted slightly when he saw the maid's face.

It was an expression of regret. This was because the maid before him was the one which his older brother had beaten with a whip to vent. Even if only by half, he was connected by blood to his brother. Thinking about that, Galahat spoke up while realising his expression was stiff.

".....Your injury, are you okay?"

"Yes. Thanks to Galahat-san giving instructions that my treatment receive high priority, I have no problems with moving now."

".....Is that so."

Galahat didn't know what to say to the maid before him. Her injuries were probably already fine. Because Galahat had given orders to give her treatment the highest priority. However, it was a fact that scars from being whipped still remained on her back. Her skin had been torn and there were several scars where her flesh had been ripped. For the maid who was still a teenage girl, how much trauma would that have caused. Thinking about that, Galahat unintentionally bit his lips, a trickle of blood flowed down from the edge of his lips.

Seeing his look, the maid soon realised what Galahat was concerned about. She turned towards Set with a smile.

"Galahat-san, is this the Griffon from the rumors in the city? I heard that it was friendly, can I stroke it?"

"Mm? Ah, Ahh. Rei?"

Being asked, Rei sensed the circumstances between the two of them and gave a small nod.

"Ah, I don't mind. Basically, he's friendly. If you don't have any intentions of hurting him, Set is quiet so you don't need to worry."

"Thank you very much. Then....."

With a smile, she gave a bow to Rei and reached out to Set's head.

"Guru~?"

Giving a small cry, Set tilted his head. Seeing that, the maid smiled as she patted his head, not believing that this could possibly be an A rank monster in front of her.

"Uwa~, his fur is extremely smooth. This is the first time I've felt something like this."

"I see, that's good.More importantly, do you know which room my brother is in?"

He thought that it was cruel to ask the girl, who had received terrible treatment from his older brother, but the current situation was tight on time. Although the adventurers who had been gathered in the mansion should have been mostly defeated or neutralised, he still wanted to bring this ridiculous commotion to a close before any irregularities occurred. That was Galahat's honest feelings. As a result, he persuaded himself that it was for the safety of the girl before him.

"Master is in the reception room."

".....Not in his office?"

Being told that Bolton was in a reception room, Galahat asked again. Because Bolton worked long hours in his office, there were magic items inside with significant defense capabilities. Galahat couldn't understand why Bolton would be in a reception room in this situation.

Of course, it was called a reception room because it was where he would

meet with guests. And as Bolton knew that he might be attacked, he would have been suitably prepared for such emergencies. However, compared to his office, where he would spend most of his day, his time spent elsewhere was negligible. Still, considering the reasons why he would be in a reception room.....

"Do you know why?"

He asked as the mansion was currently under attack. Thinking like that, there was only one reason he would be in a reception room.

"Yes. Some guests have come."

The maid gave a plain nod.

".....He's still your employer right now, can you tell me where he is so easily?"

Rei asked doubtfully, but the maid shook her head slightly.

"Certainly, we were hired by the Master. However, we aren't dolls that can't speak. We have emotions and will feel dissatisfaction if we are treated unpleasantly. In addition....."

The maid gave a sad expression for a moment. Galahat noticed the reason, he had seen her being injured directly. Murt had been accompanying him during that time as well.

Noticing their sympathetic looks, the maid shook her head with a smile.

"I am also a resident of the city of Gilm. Since I work here, I know that Azoth Firm has done various shady deals. It is also what Galahat-san is trying to stop. Because of that, I feel that the uproar this time was bound to happen."

"That's wrong!"

Though his voice was quiet, the people around him could hear his agonised voice. It was Galahat who spoke.

"I.....I, I knew what my older brother had been doing but I pretended not to see it. And yet you call me a respectable person! The disturbance this time, even though I told Rei there wouldn't be a second time, things immediately went out of my control. Rather than have my older brother killed by Rei, I tried to drag my older brother down from his position as president of Azoth Firm so

that he couldn't do anything to Rei. I only started this uproar for this purpose. As I said earlier, I'm not the person you think I am. I'm just a selfish person."

Squeezing his voice out into the surroundings, everyone fell silent. The maid gently stretched out her hand to Galahat with a smile. Due to Galahat gripping his hand hard, his skin was torn by his nails. Several drops of blood fell to the floor from his hands.

"That's no good, Galahat-san. Since Galahat-san is going to be the one to shoulder Azoth Firm from now on, injuring yourself like this.This is all I have right now, pardon me, please bear with it."

Taking a handkerchief out of her pocket, she bit down on it in her mouth and tore it in two with her teeth, tying a knot around the palm of Galahat's hand.

"This is all I can do now, please finish this as soon as possible."

".....Why?"

"What is it?"

"Why didn't you say anything? I already told you didn't I? While I knew what my older brother had been doing, I didn't stop him. Why then.....if I have moved earlier, you would never have had those scars that would stay forever just because my older brother wanted to vent."

"But even so....."

The maid grasped his hand, stopping his bleeding with a handkerchief.

"Even so, Galahat-san finally stood up. Even though it was because you wanted to help your older brother, isn't it fine if people are saved because of that? At the very least, that's what I think."

"....."

At the maid's smile, Galahat had a stunned expression.

Feeling embarrassed being stared at for so long, the maid's face turned red as she spoke with a mischievous smile.

"Then, if no one will take me and I am left on the shelf.....will Galahat-san accept me?"

"What! No, wait. Think about the difference in age. I am just over 10 years older than you!?"

"It's not that uncommon for a married couple to have such a big difference in age?"

Galahat's cheeks were dyed red at the maid's words. Well, it was safe to say that it was the final blow to Freon, who was still single at the age of over 30 and had been feeling annoyed at their conversation.

"Eehh, let's leave it here for now! If you want to flirt, you can do it after we clean up this uproar!"

Freon gave a sharp retort. Perhaps it was inevitable that there was some jealousy in those words.

"Kya-, w-what do I do. S-Sorry. I got carried away as a maid."

"T-That's right. I have to give the highest priority to stopping my brother right now. That, we'll talk about this later. It will be noisy tonight, go hide in a room for now. Also tell any servants you run into as well as any other people working in the mansion."

".....Yes. Please take care of Galahat-san."

Nodding and blushing subtly, the maid took her leave from Rei's party.....or rather, she took her leave from Galahat.

Watching her leave, Brazos muttered something as he realised it.

"That girl. She told us to look out for Galahat.....I wonder why she said that."

"Keh-, a girl in love only looks out for one person. Now then, there's that..... where is the reception room? Hey, don't get lost in your thoughts of love, get back to reality now."

Galahat, who had been watching the maid, returned to reality at Freon's words and gave a small cough to pull himself together.

"Sorry. So, the reception room was it. Then it's on the second floor. However, to get there, you have to go up a different set of stairs than the ones to the dance hall. It's in the other direction."

"I see. Let's finish this uproar quickly then. Tomorrow we will strip the materials from the Harpies....."

"No, we don't have to strip the materials from the Harpies tomorrow do we? It would be rough to sleep for a short while after finishing this uproar only to

wake up and strip materials from Harpies. I also have to host an interview for a request tomorrow afternoon."

Rei recalled the interview for his request that he had discussed with Lenora in the guild. It was no wonder as so many events had occurred in a single day.

"That's true, then we'll deal with the Harpies the day after tomorrow. If Rei didn't have that item box, even if it was tough, we would still have had to strip the materials off of them before they rotted."

Brazos nodded as Freon continued down the corridor without bringing up any objections. And.....

"That room."

About 10 minutes later, Galahat muttered as he looked towards a door that came into view.

"There are several reception rooms in the mansion. But in this emergency situation, there is no doubt that this will be the one my older brother is using as it has a hidden escape route to the outside."

"Escape route?"

"Ah. If you move away a cabinet inside the reception room, it will reveal an escape route. My older brother.....rather, Azoth Firm's previous generations of presidents all had escape routes prepared just in case. As you enter the room, the cabinet directly to the right is the entrance to the escape route. Please stop him from getting there."

".....Set."

"Guru~"

At Rei's words, Set gave a nodded, saying leave it to me.

Rei nodded, satisfied that at the very least, it would be impossible for Bolton to stand up against Set and go down the escape route.

"Okay.Here we go!"

As Galahat said that with a shout, they opened the door to the guest room and rushed inside.

Chapter 159

The reception room in Bolton's mansion. Bolton, the owner of the mansion, was facing a single person.

Bolton himself had an arrogant smile as usual, but he still reacted every time angry voices or sounds of destruction inside the mansion were heard. Just in case, a spectacular long sword was placed within reach.

Even though he was an elderly person, Bolton didn't cut corners with training his physical strength, it wasn't difficult for him to swing a sword for a minute or two. No, rather, compared to G rank adventurers, he was a lot more accustomed to handling weapons. Behind Bolton, there was only a man who looked like a thief. He was standing there while ready to pull a knife at any time. And behind the man opposite Bolton, two completely covered people with faces that couldn't be seen were standing beside him without saying a single word.

"Oh, what's going on? It seems to be strangely noisy today."

The person sitting opposite Bolton spoke up and asked.

The man was in his forties. Looking slightly skinny and combining that with a stubbly beard and chubby cheeks, it gave an unhealthy impression. The words he spoke out could be said to be superficially polite. They poked fun towards Bolton, who was 20 years older than him.

".....There's no problem. We are about to finish our matters for the day."

On the other hand, Bolton replied without trying to change the man's attitude.

Yes. Normally, Bolton was very aware of his own power, but he said nothing towards the attitude of the rude man.

"Heh~. In that case, why did you call me over? It's because you need me. Isn't that right?"

With a smile, he took out a small bottle the size of his fingertip from his pocket and placed it on the table.

".....I certainly called you over in case there was an emergency, but it was just because there might be an emergency, it's only insurance, nothing more."

That said, Bolton's eyes were directed on the bottle placed on the table.

"Well, that's nostalgic. It's been more than 20 years already since the first time I made medicine for you. With the improvements upon improvements I made to it, you could say it's already a completely different thing."

"Hmph, medicine you say. You sure can speak eloquently."

"Medicine is medicine right? As its name says, even poisons are medicines. However, wait a bit. Yes, it's just that the effect is a little bit too strong." TLN: The characters for 'poison' contain the character for 'medicine'.

"Well, that's your idiotic nonsense as usual. So then, with this.....no, what's the effect of this medicine?"

"From the experiments, a strong male D rank adventurer suffered for about 10 days in pain and anguish after getting scratched by a knife coated with this medicine. At the end, he was crying to heaven to kill himself."

Out of the man's mouth came words with cruel information. However, Bolton listened to the man's words with no change in expression.

"Hmph, that annoying fool. It's unbelievable that he shares half a blood connection with me."

"Oh, oh. Yet, you still used him as a chess piece for yourself?"

".....It must be caused by the blood of that bitch."

"Is that so? Still, I think he was quite useful to raise up the name of Azoth Firm as a B rank adventurer."

"He was only useful to that extent. Although getting some other subordinates to take his credit was somewhat useful.....because he still has that shitty sense of justice in his mind, I can't trust my back to him. Tenda has the skill as well, but he gets battle crazed when he starts to fight."

"Kufu~, hehehehe. That's enough to take advantage of him."

When the man said that, the shadow of one of the cloak wearing people approached the man and quietly whispered something in his ear before immediately returning to his original location.

"Is that so.....that's a shame."

Unexpectedly, the man changed his tone from his previously rude manner. His words contained some feelings of disappointment.

".....What's a shame?"

"Because of this. Don't you get it yet? It seems that the adventurers Bolton-san had been boasting of have already been annihilated."

"What!? You're stupid, almost all of Azoth Firm's adventurers have been gathered here you know? It seems that brat Rei was coming as well but the difference in strength should be overwhelming. Galahat has the highest rank among them but he can't move with his injuries. There is no way the adventurers I've hired could lose!"

"It's because of that that I'm troubled. Still, Rei was it? I heard the rumors.....it seems like he's a competent adventurer. Indeed, it's troubling to say but we can't deal with quality with quantity. Now it's come to this, you can only increase the quality to deal with him.....no, if you use my medicine, it might be possible to some extent. Then what is important is that you gather more people with a minimum level of quality."

The man entered his own world and started muttering stuff as he spoke to Bolton while thinking of something.

Bolton spoke up again while looking disagreeable.

"Shut up for a moment. So then, have the adventurers gathered in the mansion been defeated?"

"Do you doubt my words?"

"Naturally. You were the one who said that they had been annihilated, but I can't confirm that. In other words, I can consider all you're saying right now to be nonsense."

Hearing Bolton's words, the man's cheeks stiffened.

"Well, I've only given you advice, if you don't listen to it, I don't mind. Minas, Cordo, let's go. We'll get caught up in the disturbance here. Regardless of what we have to benefit, I don't want to get caught in this family disturbance."

Speaking to the two robe wearing people, Minas and Cordo, the man rose up from his chair.....when the next moment, the door to the reception room opened.

Not by the man's hand but by the hands of others.

"-!?"

Minas and Cordo noticed that and silently stepped forward to protect the man. Their eyes reflected several figures. Leading was a man in his thirties, from the information they had heard previously, Minas judged that he was Galahat.

".....Who is it?"

But to Galahat, they were covered in robes and had he had never seen them before. He asked unintentionally before immediately realising who the people before him were.

"I see, are you my brother's guests?"

"Yes, that's right. I've been trading with Bolton for a long time. I came today with that intention, I never considered that there was currently a family feud going on. Because of that, I'm planning to go back today.....is that fine with you? Galahat-san was it, even if it's you, you won't involve a 3rd party irresponsibly in your family trouble right?"

Towards the man, who said that somewhat teasingly, Galahat nodded while frowning slightly.

"Of course. If you're just adventurers cooperating with my older brother, I won't do anything to his business partners."

Saying that, Galahat made way. The man bowed his head with a frivolous smile.

"Sorry. If Galahat-san becomes the president of Azoth Firm, I'll come to say hello again."

"Wait! Are you going to leave just like that!"

Seeing the man about to quickly leave the room, Bolton gave a shout.

As for Bolton, the only forces he had left was the thief in the room acting as his escort. Of course, there was also his own strength, but he knew that he couldn't fight the adventurers before him on equal terms.

If they left him here, Bolton's life would be over. Judging that, Bolton yelled at the man in anger.

"Have you forgotten the benefits you've received so far!"

"Even so, isn't this your family feud in the end? Then, we....."

As the man was saying that, behind Galahat, Set appeared in front of Rei and gave a cry of urgency as the man tried to leave.

"Gurururururururu~."

As usual, it wasn't a cry he gave when he was happy. His cry felt like one of anger. Even Bolton, whom Set wasn't looking at directly, stopped moving.

(.....Not at Bolton?)

While stroking Set, Rei thought to himself. Set was not looking at Bolton, who was not visible from the door, but towards the middle-aged man with a stubbly beard who was trying to leave the room past Galahat.No, Set was looking towards the two people wearing robes with their faces completely obscured by their hoods on either side of the man. Set looked like he was ready to jump forward at any moment, carefully observing the three people while tilting his head.

Near Rei, Set had suddenly revealed the ferocity that could be said to be the nature of an A rank monster. Murt was almost unable to stand due to his surprise and had to lean against his halberd. Brazos and Freon managed somehow with strained expressions.

It was an explosive situation. At the potentially irreversible situation should anyone make a move, the man spoke up in interest.

"Hey, a Griffon. It's my first time seeing the real thing.Hey, you're Rei-kun from the rumors right? If you don't mind, please give that Griffon to me....."

"Gururururu~."

".....I don't think he will hand it over, mm."

The moment he said that, Set gave a bloodthirsty growl. Seeing that Set was upset, the man shook his head disappointingly.

(.....What? Why is Set so alert against them? Have I met them before.....I don't understand why. If Set judges that he needs to be vigilant against them, there's no way I can ignore that. Then.....)

Set could understand Rei's words but Rei couldn't understand Set's. Even if they were connected by the Magic Beast Art, Rei could only get a rough understanding. For example, Rei could understand[I am hungry],[I'm sleepy]or[I want to play]but it was only a rough understanding. He still couldn't understand the fine details. Still, because Set was alert, it meant that there was something dangerous. Taking his hand off stroking Set, Rei spoke while ready to swing his Death Scythe at any time.

"Hey, you guys.....who the hell are you? It's unusual for Set to be so wary of his opponents."

"Well, even if you ask who we are. We aren't anyone other than Bolton's trading partners?"

".....Considering all that, you seem to be trying to abandon your important trading partner?"

"This matter can't be avoided. It's Azoth Firm that we're trading with, not Bolton as an individual."

(.....He said[We]. In other words there's someone behind him? Or is he referring to the people wearing the robes with him. And while they said they were Bolton's trading partner, the next moment, they said they were trading partners with Azoth Firm.)

"Do-.....Don't be stupid-! You, are you forgetting the favours I've given you up until now! In fact, you've already started undertaking work in the city of Gilm....."

"Are you sure you want to say more?"

The man spoke to block the words that Bolton was about to say. Hearing that, Bolton heard his breath on reflex.

"Heeh~, that's interesting. I would be happy if you could tell me more about that?"

Thinking that Bolton was about to say something he shouldn't be speaking of, Freon asked the man in interest.

"Sorry, but as expected, this is something confidential. I can't afford to give a 3rd party information about that.Now then, is that fine? Sorry, but we don't have that much time to spare."

"Well, in other words. Apparently, you know a lot about Bolton's secrets.In particular, that small bottle on the table over there looks meaningful."

Rei looked around the room in his line of sight. There was a small bottle on the table.

"-!?"

Bolton might have noticed what Rei was looking at. He hurriedly reached for the bottle.

Noticing that his behaviour only made it more suspicious, after grabbing the bottle, he glared at Rei.

"As you can see, it seems to be quite special. In addition....."

Turning towards Galahat, Rei nodded and held the Death Scythe's handle out towards the man.

It's speed wasn't fast. Or rather, if the man was an adventurer, he could have avoided it without any problems. It was such an attack. Unfortunately the man wasn't an adventurer, he couldn't avoid it and the tip of the Death Scythe's handle struck his body.....

"-!?"

As the handle of the Death Scythe was about to hit his body, something flew out from the robe of the person called Minas, blocking the Death Scythe's handle.

.....Yes, a purple tentacle appeared from inside his robe.

Seeing that, Rei finally understood why Set was so wary of the people before them. It was because Rei remembered those tentacles.

Forcibly pulling the Death Scythe away from the tentacles, Rei muttered.

".....So it's underlings from the Bestir Empire."

Chapter 160

In Bolton's mansion, Rei encountered a man and two other human figures clad in robes. He then thrust the Death Scythe's handle towards that man who seemed to be the leader among them. But the moment it was about to hit the man, the person called Minas had stopped the blow.

...With the purple tentacle protruding from his robe.

Rei had indeed seen that tentacle before. It was on the lowest floor of the dungeon he went to along with Elena's party. It was like the one Vel – who was thought to be Elena's guard – had used, or better said, employed when he revealed his true colours at the Altar of Inheritance. After that, Vel changed sides to Bestir Empire, and proudly declared that the tentacle was a product of Alchemy from Bestir Empire. In other words.

"...So it's underlings from the Bestir Empire."

As the Rei muttered those words, everyone aside from that man directed their gazes at Rei. Their expressions were filled with shock.

"It can't be! Did you just say Bestir Empire!?"

While raising a surprised voice, Brazos brandished his Earthshaker Hammer that he shouldered.

Seeing both Freon and Murt similarly readying up their weapons, Rei directed a sharp gaze towards the three in front and muttered.

"I never thought you'd appear in such a remote region."

"Oh? Why did you think I was related to Bestir Empire...would you mind me asking that?"

The man asked while giving a smile. He didn't seem to be trying to hide the fact that they were from Bestir Empire anymore. And as to protect him, Minas and Cordo stepped in front of him.

Inside the reception room of Bolton's mansion, both sides faced at each other, divided by the doorway to the room..

Minas and Cordo in front and behind the man.

Then the remaining members of Rei's group lined up next to himself and Galahat, and surrounded the two men, readying up their weapons to attack at any time.

Even in such tense state of affairs the man didn't erase his smile and addressed Rei in a familiar manner, as if they were old friends.

"We are indeed the Bestir Empire's subordinates."

"...You sure admit it quite easily."

Galahat muttered as he took a few steps back. He made that move after thinking that if it turned into a fight he would just burden them due to the current physical condition. Murt stepped in front of him so that he could protect him.

Even as he observed that situation, the man didn't try to do anything and just smiled as he spoke.

"After all, you pinpointed that we were from Bestir Empire. If you said a different country or thought I was some noble of this country, I would've still tried feigning ignorance... but since you identified us so accurately, I believe you saw something definitive that proved that we were indeed from Bestir Empire. So would you mind me asking about it?"

While saying that his gaze was directed at Minas. Or more precisely, towards the numerous tentacles extending from the robe that she wore.

Those tentacles that made one feel instinctively disgusted just by looking, were returning back into his robe as they wriggled.

Perhaps he also understood that those tentacles were the cause of it. And the reason he took his time to still ask that question was that while he predicted that Rei saw through those tentacles, he was still not fully convinced.

"Before that, I would like to hear your name by all means."

"Oh? And what do you plan to do after knowing it?"

"Hey, it's nothing that serious. If I don't at least know your name, I'd be troubled on what to write on your tomb, wouldn't I? I can't just go and give you a random name, can I."

"Ahahaha. I would like you to save me from that. I'd like for my tombstone to have my real name, after all."

The conversation between Rei and that man could've been described as a friendly chat if observed superficially. However, the contents of their conversation were full of danger. Rei's killing intent and the man's maddened curiosity were hidden behind the paper-thin veneer.

While the surrounding people sensed that critical line and became very tense, the one to break the silence was the man.

"Well, fine. I don't really mind telling you my name. My name is Postguerra. Let's get along."

"Absurd! Didn't you introduce yourself to me as Riv!"

"Hm? Ah, that reminds me, I did give Bolton-san a fake name. Riv is my alias. My real name is Postguerra. Let's get along."

"...Why did you expressly use an alias?"

As Rei asked that, the man scratched his bearded cheek somewhat awkwardly and smiled.

"After all, there's no need to go out of your way tell your name to a puppet just because it asks the name of its puppeteer, is there?"

"Wha, y-you bastard! Are you calling me a puppet... How dare you, how dare you, how dare youuu! I am the president of Azoth Firm, Bolton! You are calling someone like me a puppet!? The likes of an alchemist making a fool out of me, there's a limit to everything! Get him! Kill that guy and let him receive the payoff for looking down on me!"

With Bolton's command, the thief man standing behind him took a single step forward.

While his footwork seemed to be inferior to Tenda who was in charge of the underside of Azoth Firm, his movements could nevertheless be called smooth if compared to other low ranked adventurers around.

He stepped forward with footwear that didn't emit the sound and quickly threw the knife he pulled out from his pocket towards Postguerra.

The edge of the thrown knife was wet with what seemed to be poison; Rei

and few others were the only ones to realise it. At the very least, Postguerra and Murt weren't able to see through that. However...

"Oh? What could be the matter?"

Postguerra's voice mixed with laughter reverberated in the surroundings.

The one to move wasn't Minas who was blocking the way between Postguerra and Rei's group, but instead the other person called Cordo. He extended a disgusting purple tentacle from his robe just like Minas and seized the knife heading for Postguerra's face. Moreover, the tentacle was tightly grasping and holding the knife's handle. It was a feat that wasn't possible to achieve unless the person perfectly saw the movement of the quickly thrown knife. And, the next moment.

"Gaah!"

He threw the knife he was grasping with the tentacle back towards its owner with an even faster speed, slicing through the air.

Perhaps the thief was quite skilled himself, given that he was entrusted with Bolton's protection, or perhaps Cordo didn't really care about where he threw it. The thrown knife didn't go for his head or throat, or even his heart that could be said to be a vital point, but instead deeply pierced into his shoulder.

The thief sank to the floor while leaking an anguished voice. After all, the knife was coated full of anaesthetic, and when the drug suddenly entered his body he became unable to move.

"..."

Properly speaking, he was supposed to follow up on his attack here, however, Cordo stood still at Postguerra's side without any further actions.

"Not bad."

"Right? As my guards, these two are quite skilled. That's why I think it's better for you not to start a fight with me and overlook me, how about it?"

As Rei muttered while looking at the fallen man, Postguerra replied to Rei.

"Brother...why did you get involved with the people of Bestir Empire. If Margrave Rowlocks learned of this matter, the Azoth Firm would be closed at

the worst case, you know!?"

Bolton momentarily tensed up from Galahat's voice, but he quickly shouted back.

"Aaagh! Shut up! Anyway, do something about this guy who insulted me! If you do that, I'll pretend nothing happened today!"

[...]

What is this guy saying? Rei and others directed a gaze at him with such thoughts.

They saw an old man who was still thinking he would come out safely from it, after this late into the game. It wouldn't be wrong to call this situation rather comedic.

"Galahat, Ignore that old fool for now. Securing this man comes first. I didn't think an alchemist from Bestir Empire would come all the way to this remote region. Although the course of events brought this situation, I'd like to fulfil my duty as the resident of Mireana Empire, in my own way."

While saying that, the face of Vel, who faced the Altar of Inheritance along with Elena's group – who betrayed them in the middle of a ritual they held there – flashed through his mind.

(Well, judging by the fact that he didn't know about me, I suppose he isn't related to Vel... but even so, if I capture him it should deal a significant damage to Bestir Empire.)

"Hey, old fool. I have business with you later. Just stay trembling there for now."

"Wha, y-you bastard! How dare you say that to me, the president of Azoth Firm!"

"Shut up. I don't have time to deal with the likes of you now. If you keep moving around too much, you'll get dragged into this and die, you know?"

"Guh..."

He probably felt in Rei's eyes that he was being serious. He glared detestably at him, but he didn't say anything more and reseated himself on the sofa.

Perhaps his guts should've been commended. Despite the various problems,

he was still the president of Azoth Firm so he did have some courage in him.

"...It appears you are dead set on capturing me, but let me give you a single warning. Both Minas and Cordo are far stronger than adventurers around here, you know?"

Postguerra's words made Murt swallow his saliva. Brazos and Freon next to him stiffened from tension, and Galahat, who was the highest in rank among them, also ground his teeth in frustration from realising that he would only drag them back in his current state.

Postguerra smiled deep down that it was going as he expected, but he didn't say it out loud, as expected.

Crash!

The great swing of Rei's Death Scythe split apart the door of the reception entrance along with the wall.

Rei who blew away all the accumulated hopelessness with that one swing, spoke while showing a smile on top of it.

"Don't worry, those two people... no. Two beasts, I guess? Anyway, I and Set will handle those. You people keep an eye on that Alchemist so that he doesn't escape. ...Listen, that guy most probably has a Magic Item for teleportation. If he does some strange movement, you can go ahead and cut one or two of his limbs. In any case, pay attention so that he doesn't escape."

It was the teleportation Magic Item Vel used at the Altar of Inheritance. Because Rei had witnessed it with his own eyes before, he was well aware of how the Bestir Empire people were fast on their feet when it came to escaping.

After confirming that all of them nodded, Set appeared from behind Rei.

"Gururu~"

Then he raised a deep cry while facing Minas with a dangerous gaze.

"What's the matter? Aren't you going to come? If you don't, then I and Set will both fight this Minas fellow, you know?"

Rei provoked Cordo while brandishing the Death Scythe in one hand.

Cordo looked towards Bolton seated on the sofa for a few seconds, but then as if he had lost interest, he quickly sent a questioning gaze towards Postguerra.

"Ah, go ahead. A puppet that has its strings cut wouldn't be able to do anything. So keep him company."

After Cordo got his master's permission, he walked towards Rei and lined up next to Minas, appearing that he had completely lost interest in Bolton.

While looking at that situation, Bolton, being called a puppet whose strings were cut, directed a hatred-filled glare towards Postguerra and Rei.

(Shit, shit, shit! Looking down on me of me like that! I won't forgive them. I'll teach them a lesson one day!)

Bolton burned with rage inside, but he didn't even consider the possibility of the Lord of Gilm, Daska, discarding him. He was convinced that if he overcame this situation, he would be able to continue to another day just as always.

"This place is quite crowded so maybe it's better to move somewhere more spacious... actually, there's no need for that. There's no need to go out of my way and make it more advantageous for them."

Postguerra cut his talk short while observing Rei's Scythe, And his Griffon whose body exceeded 2 meters.

"I don't really mind that, but it's no fun to get what you want so easily...right!"

Along with those words, Rei kicked the ground and closed the distance with Cordo. Since there wasn't much distance between them in the first place, the distance disappeared completely in truly an instant.

Rei who wielded the Death Scythe exceeding 2 meters had fully closed the distance. That meant that Rei had willingly given up on the distance where he could fully exhibit the power of his Death Scythe. As if realising that, Cordo momentarily stopped his movements due to surprise, but not minding that, Rei powerfully swung his Death Scythe.

The Death Scythe that was swung while it broke the door and wall along its way wouldn't deal any significant blow to Cordo who was located within the inner side of the blade. ...That said, the inner side of its handle was sent his way,

and due to Rei's strength combined with the Death Scythe's weight, the attack he received blew him away without being able to endure it and crashed him through the reception wall towards the outside.

"Gurururu~!"

Minas' body also got blown away by the swing of Set's eagle claws, disregarding the existence of the wall just like Rei and was lying next to Cordo.

(Shall I secure Postguerra and fall back for the time being? Now that a Bestir Empire alchemist has appeared, I've no time to deal with the internal squabbles of this firm... No, I can't exactly leave those suspicious alone here either, huh.)

He made a decision in split second and stepped towards the hole in the reception room.

"Okay, I and Set will go finish those guys off. You guys stay here and keep watch on Postguerra!"

Leaving those words behind to the remaining people, Rei jumped through the destroyed wall of the reception room and got outside.

Set, too, made a new hole through the wall and jumped outside in order to follow him.

Chapter 161

It was nearing the time when the date changes. Inside Bolton's mansion in the upper class district, the climax to this uproar was about to happen.

From the reception room, Cordo and Minas were literally blasted into the garden. Rei and Set confronted them together.

".....You are....."

At that point, Rei raised a voice of surprise towards the two he was confronting.

Whether it was Cordo or Minas, after receiving an attack that destroyed the wall, the robes on their bodies were no longer intact, showing what was beneath them.

Maybe it would have been a different story if they were wearing a magic item like Rei's Dragon Robe. However, Cordo and Minas simply wore robes to hide themselves.

It was obvious why such robes were necessary as soon as what was underneath them was revealed.

For Cordo, his facial skin was like a crustacean, similar to the shell of a crab. On his shell covered face, only his eyes were human and unlike the eyes of a crab. His looks made one feel disgust. Compared to Cordo, Minas looked closer to a human. However, her face was still deformed. There were about four different protrusions from her forehead and her ears were almost 30cm long. Still, unlike Cordo, she still looked similar enough to a human woman.

Of course, even so, if an ordinary person encountered Minas at night, they would still fall into a state of panic. Still, it was better than Cordo, whose entire face was covered in a shell.

".....Monsters? Or are you demi-humans?No, I see."

Rei raised his eyebrows slightly when he saw their appearances, but eventually guessed what the two people before him were.

(Elena said that the Bestir Empire simplified the inheritance ceremony. In other words, these guys?)

Rei observed both Cordo and Minas while thinking to himself.

Compared to Elena, who had formally undergone the ceremony at the Alter of Inheritance, the two people before him seem to have stopped being human.

They seemed to be more like a hybrid between a human and a monster.

"What's wrong? Are you terrified of our appearances?"

Cordo spoke, asking in flat voice with no emotion.

(While they stopped being human, they can still speak human language fluently.)

While thinking to himself, Rei shifted the Death Scythe with a smile.

"No way. I was just surprised you were surprisingly human under those robes."

"Humans, are we?"

"Ah. If you ignore the things on your face that is."

"You, have you seen Demon Soldiers other than us?"

Cordo asked, seemingly puzzled. Rei frowned as he thought to himself.

(Demon Soldiers is the name given to people who underwent the simplified inheritance ceremony. But when I think about what they said, there should be quite a large number of them.)

"Well, I wonder. Even if I have met Demon Soldiers other than you, what would you do after hearing that?"

".....What? What do you mean by that?"

"You're a bit stupid. Is it because you're Demon Soldiers? Since you'll be taken out by me and Set, there's no point even if I tell you."

"That's impossible. We, Demon Soldiers, would be taken out by humans like you? Even if you have a Griffon, an A rank monster, in the end it's just a simple minded monster. The power of a monster and the wisdom of humans. It is us and not you who have combined the two."

Minas replied unpleasantly to Rei's words. Nevertheless, she was still wary of

the Griffon, which should be stronger than herself. Every time Set moved slightly, she would immediately look towards him.

"Set, I'll leave Minas to you. Because I want to get more information from them, I want to hand over real Demon Soldiers to Margrave Rowlocks, so if you can, try to just incapacitate them.However, only do that if you can. If your position gets dangerous, I don't mind if you kill him. Any how, we still have Postguerra as a source of information."

"Gurururu~"

Set gave a cry at Rei's words. Cordo glanced at them without any emotion while Minas frowned unpleasantly.

"It seems we've underestimated these Demon Soldiers one way or another. Okay then, I will crush Cordo's baseless confidence."

As soon as Rei said that, Minas took off the robe she was wearing. Underneath, her entire body was covered in scales, like a Lizardman. Even though her entire body was covered in scales, her face, chest and waist still resembled that of a woman. However, the two purple tentacles growing out of each of her shoulders stimulated a physiological sense of disgust.

"Is a fight inevitable? I guess it can't be helped."

Cordo muttered as he took off his robe. Unlike Minas, who still had a human figure, although covered in scales, Cordo looked like a mix between a human and a crab. Both his arms were tough looking claws, similar to that of a crab or crayfish. He had three purple tentacles growing from each flank, left and right, similar to the ones growing from Minas' shoulders. As for his lower body, it was something like a squid or octopus, with slightly less than 20 tentacles with suction cups, growing from his lower body. Each of squirmed around like a worm.

At that, Rei frowned his eyebrows at his irregular appearance that surpassed his expectations.

Speaking of the inheritance ceremony that Rei saw himself, Elena had used a magic stone from an Ancient Dragon. The figure of Elena after safely completing the ceremony was no different from her figure before starting it.

(Although I was told they used a simplified inheritance ceremony.....as far as I can see, it seems to be something completely different.)

Thinking to himself, Rei readied his Death Scythe. Beside him, Set was ready to jump at Minas.

"Unfortunately, I have various errands to run tomorrow. I'll finish this quickly."

"Your life ends today. You don't need to worry about tomorrow."

Towards Rei's words of provocation, Cordo returned with a flat, emotionless voice as usual.

"Gurururu~"

"Come over here kitty. Even if you're an A rank monster, you're still just a monster. The wisdom of humans and the power of monsters. It's been 20 years since the two of us became Demon Soldiers."

At Set's cry, which was filled with fighting spirit, Minas beckoned at him with her scaly hands.

And.....

"Haah!"

Starting with a preemptive strike, Rei dashed towards Cordo, swinging the Death Scythe down.

"....."

Turning towards Rei, who was nearing him, the moment he saw the Death Scythe being swung down, Cordo moved back using his multiple tentacles growing from his low body. But.....

"Flying Slash!"

Swinging the blade down, Rei activated the skill Flying Slash and a slash flew out. As expected, Cordo was surprised and stopped for a moment. Judging that he couldn't avoid the attack, he raised both his claws to block it.

Kin~!

The sound of something metallic and unlike a shell was heard.....

"That's a shame."

Speaking in a flat voice, Cordo moved his claws aside and hopped backwards after blocking the slash.

"I see, it seems like those claws of yours are pretty sturdy. However, there's only so much you can block. Rather, aren't you Demon Soldiers? You guys are just the right opponents to train with."

".....One's overconfidence will destroy themselves. No, your life will end here anyway. Use it as you please."

(At that time with Vel, those purple tentacles blocked any attacks. The feeling from that time, the tentacles are the same.....well, the difference is that they're growing directly from their bodies instead of using a magic item in their hands.....they didn't block the Flying Slash though, or rather, they couldn't? In that case.....)

"Fu~!"

Rei threw a knife he took out from the Misty Ring and shortened the distance to Cordo again.

"This is meaningless."

Muttering, Cordo parried the knife heading towards his torso using the tentacles growing from his sides. However, that was what Rei had expected. And since he had been expecting that, his next action had already finished.

"Flying Slash!"

Aiming for the moment the knife was blocked, the Death Scythe was swung again. Sending a slash flying out.....

Slash-!

The tentacles, which had just blocked the knife, could not block the flying slash that Rei had sent out. The three tentacles growing from Cordo's left side were sliced off together.

"Hey, eat this!"

With those words, the Death Scythe was swung. Cordo saw Rei's movements and his face distorted into a tearless frown from the pain of the tentacles being

cut off. The shell covering his arms was very sturdy. From his past experience in combat, swords, spears and bows, even if he took an attack from an axe or hammer, he wouldn't suffer a single wound. More often, the weapons that attacked him would be destroyed.

(There's no doubt that this Rei has a magic item. I won't be able to destroy his weapon. However, there is no way my shell will break.)

Cordo came to that conclusion, but from the beginning, Rei's aim was not Cordo's upper body, which was covered in a solid shell.

It was already too late by the time Cordo noticed. The Death Scythe, which should have been held in his sight, disappeared. The next moment, nearly half the tentacles growing from his lower body were cut off.

"-!?"

He had lost most of the tentacles growing from his lower body. Cordo instinctively realised that and used his remaining tentacles to push against the ground and retreat backwards.

(Impossible. Cutting off the tentacles on my lower body so easily.)

Even though he had experienced many fights as a Demon Soldier so far, he never remembered having his lower tentacles being cut off even once.

Of course, those who had found out that attacking his shell was useless had aimed at the tentacles growing from his lower body, that looked to be soft at first. However, the tentacles that looked like they could easily be cut off were protected by a liquid mucus, making it impossible for common weapons to exert their cutting power against them. As a result, it was unexpected for Cordo to have half his tentacles cut off like this.

"To be able to cut them without putting any magic power into the the blade of the Death Scythe, it seems the tentacles on your lower body aren't much stronger defensively than the tentacles on your upper body."

Waving the Death Scythe, Rei muttered as he flicked off the highly sticky liquid stuck on the blade.

"....."

Those words were basically a death sentence to Cordo. Because that meant that Rei's attack power against him could go even higher than it was right now.

"Now then, I've checked the hardness of your shell. I also found out about the tentacles on your torso and lower body.Do you still have any means of attacking? If not, I would like to finish this fight soon."

".....I would be troubled if you underestimated us Demon Soldiers."

After replying to Rei, instead of Cordo, it was Rei's turn for his eyes to go wide. From the wounds of the tentacles that should have been cut off, flesh swelled and grew. About 10 seconds later, new tentacles had grown back.

"I see. So you have the ability to regenerate."

Muttering, Rei raised his eyebrows as he thought to himself.

(A crustacean similar to a crab. Three tentacles on each side. A lower body made of tentacles similar to a squid or octopus.What kind of monster's magic stone did he use for the inheritance ceremony? As far as I know, there are no monsters with those features. In that case, did he simply use the magic stone of a monster he didn't know of.....or.)

Rei observed Cordo while holding the Death Scythe.

(Regarding the purple tentacles growing from his sides, considering Vel used a similar magic item, they were probably added after the ceremony. Then a crab like crustacean and the tentacles of a squid or octopus. Speaking of a common point, they're both sea creatures.Well, that's fine. It's not my job to investigate this, I'll leave the details to Margrave Rowlocks' subordinates.)

"I was certainly surprised about your regenerative abilities, but it seems to be only the tentacles from your lower body.Am I wrong?"

That question was a kind of bluff. However, it wasn't completely guesswork. In any case, the tentacles on his lower body seemed to be distinctly different. It was a question he had only thought about simply. However, Cordo's face twitched slightly. That alone was enough of an answer for Rei.

"It seems that was the correct answer. In that case, what if I do this!"

Giving a sharp remark, Rei dashed forward and shortened the distance to

Cordo.

Chapter 162

"HAAAaaa-! ! "

Rei dashed forward, narrowing his distance to Cordo while poisoning his Death Scythe.

Despite declaring that he had many tricks up his sleeve, Cordo was relieved seeing that this attack seemed to have the same power as before.

But he immediately remembered Rei's words that his previous attack was[an attack that did not contain his magic power].

(Certainly, his attack that cut off my lower tentacles did not contain magic power, but he couldn't destroy my shell. Naturally, that means his next attack should be magic empowered.)

Seeing Rei head towards him, Cordo took a breath.

Seeing that movement, Rei had a premonition and shouted almost on reflex.

"Magic Shield!"

Among the skills that the Death Scythe had, it could create a shield of light to block a single attack. The shield of light produced by that skill needed some time to form, but fortunately, it was in time for this moment. As soon as it was created, it disappeared the next moment.

Yes, it immediately blocked the Water Breath spat out of Cordo's mouth.

Released at high pressure, water could slice through metal smoothly. The Water Breath that Cordo used wasn't that powerful but was still powerful enough to easily hurt someone. Still, the Magic Shield blocked the attack.

"-!?"

Cordo, seeing his Water Breath blocked, which was one of his trump cards, he stopped moving for a moment in surprise. And for Rei, that moment was enough.

"Haah!"

A single attack from the magic empowered Death Scythe swept up from below. Even so, it only had the power to break or cut through Cordo's shell. Instead, Rei aimed for the joints between the shells.

By the time Cordo realised it, the blade was already too close to avoid. The next moment, Rei's swing of the Death Scythe cut the three tentacles growing from Cordo's right side and sliced cleanly through Cordo's right elbow, sending it flying into the air.

"Guh!"

Even though he was a Demon Soldier, Cordo still felt pain and gave a groan as his right claw was cut away. Rei wasn't naive enough to miss the opportunity at the instantaneous gap in motion due to Cordo's pain.

"Gaah~!"

Cordo gave another groan.

After cutting off Cordo's right claw, Rei cut through Cordo's right shoulder on the return slash.

Right arm from the elbow and his entire left arm. Since he had lost both his claws, which were Cordo's main weapons, he had few means of attack left. All six of his strong defensive tentacles that grew from his sides had been cut off. Cordo had almost no way to attack anymore.He had one method left, other than his Water Breath that had been blocked earlier as well.

(He will come closer. Even if I die here, I will do my part as a Demon Soldier. Us Demon Soldier have to keep giving results. That is to encourage those that come after us.)

"....."

Cordo, who was still in a state of shock from being slashed at his right elbow and left shoulder, pretended to lose consciousness as he prepared himself for a final attack to try to reverse the situation.

Za~za~za~, listening to the sounds of Rei approaching him in the garden, he watched his timing.....

(.....?)

He wondered why the footsteps stopped several meters away from where he had fallen to the ground.

However, since he couldn't let Rei know that he was still conscious, Cordo kept his eyes closed and waited for a chance.

Probably because Cordo had focused all his consciousness to his limit to release a final attack, he noticed a sound. Otherwise, he probably would have missed it. It came from directly above him and was coming down. In other words, the sound was heading towards him.

"-!?"

Moving the tentacles on his lower body to shift himself. The next moment, Rei swept down with the handle of the Death Scythe where Cordo had been a moment ago.

".....I thought so. Didn't you say you were a Demon Soldier? I didn't think that the trump card of the Bestir Empire would faint from something like that."

Landing on the ground with barely a sound, Rei muttered while holding the Death Scythe.

"....."

Knowing that his surprise attack was now ineffective, Cordo rose up using the tentacles on his lower body as he distorted his lips in bitterness.

"Well, what will you do? You don't have any way to attack anymore, do you? It will be simple if you surrender here. If you obediently tell us the information we want, you probably could also receive good treatment you know?"

"....."

He disregarded Rei's proposal without even considering it.

For Cordo, if he turned traitor now, it was clear that the treatment of other Demon Soldiers would get worse, so it was absolutely impossible for him to choose surrender here.

"It seems you have no intention. I don't know why you won't, did you have to swear an oath of allegiance when you got this body? "

"You don't understand.Yes, people with talent like you will never

understand our feelings!"

Crying out, as if his flat voice and lack of emotion was a lie, he spat out another Water Breath from his shell covered face.

The first time he used it, it was a surprise, but now that Rei knew about it, it wasn't hard to deal with.

"-!"

At the Water Breath flying towards his face, Rei shifted his head a few cm to avoid it.

"Since you've revealed all your cards, I won't be caught out even if you use it two or three times. If you don't surrender, then I can only use more forceful means.....is that fine with you?"

"Damn it!"

Rei approached while holding the Death Scythe. Cordo continuously spat out Water Breath to try to stop him, but Rei avoided or blocked all of them with the Death Scythe. Before long, he ran out of body moisture to spit out using Water Breath and just watched Rei silently approach.

Though his eyes hardly showed any emotion, it still demonstrated his will that he would not surrender.

"If possible, I wanted to slice off the tentacles on your lower body so that you couldn't move. But seeing what happened before, you will probably regrow them. Because of that, I'll have to knock you out."

Rei frowned slightly as he looked at Cordo. Most of his body was covered in shell. His defence was the real thing. In order to knock him out in a single attack, he had no choice but to empower his Death Scythe with magic.....

"Well, as long as you're alive, Margrave Rowlocks will be able to do something about it. Don't die."

Saying that, he was about to thrust the handle of the magic empowered Death Scythe towards Cordo's stomach.

"-!?"

That moment, something moved in the corner of his vision. Rei dashed away

from Cordo.

"....."

An attack aiming to reverse the situation from the brink. Cordo seemed to have a regretful expression.

After Rei took some distance from Cordo, he looked towards the place he had been earlier. There were two tentacles with sharp points like spears stabbed into the ground. The tentacles came from Cordo's lower body.

He had about 20 tentacles growing from his lower body. Among them, two were longer than the others and had sharp pointed tips.

(.....Are those squid tentacles?)

Squid tentacles. This referred to the two extra long tentacles that squids had, the other tentacles of squids usually called arms. It was an organ used by squids to capture their pray, a squid's biggest weapon.

(It can't be, a Demon Soldier with squid aspects as well? No, a squid isn't a monster in the first place, so there shouldn't be such a magic stone.)

While thinking to himself, the Death Scythe struck quickly swaying whip like tentacles.

"Guh!"

Unlike the other tentacles growing from his lower body, whether he felt the pain sensation or not, he gave a groan of pain from these ones. Not missing that moment that Cordo stopped, Rei swung the Death Scythe back with a flick of his wrist and used the momentum to thrust the tip of the handle towards Cordo's body.

Cordo's shell had enough defense to break mediocre weapons. But as expected, it was impossible to block the magic empowered Death Scythe. The handle of the Death Scythe sank in as it crushed the shell.

If he didn't limit his magic power, he could have pierced the handle of the Death Scythe through Cordo's back without much difficulty. However, Rei's purpose was the Bestir Empire.....in addition, as a prisoner of war, they could obtain more information about the existence of Demon Soldiers, which they

didn't know a lot of at the moment. Because of that, if he killed Cordo, he would get nothing out of it.

Alternatively, they could also get information out of the alchemist who should be suppressed inside Bolton's mansion. They might also be able to get information out of Minas, who was currently in an intense fight with Set. But Rei decided that it would be better to have multiple information sources.

(Well, seeing the loyal personality of Cordo, I don't think he'll sell out any information on his friends. Margrave Rowlocks' subordinates who will be doing the interrogating will have to do their best.)

While Rei was knocking Cordo out into a half dead state, the fight between Set and Minas was about to reach its climax.

"Ugh, why.....why-!"

Though she swung her whip, which seemed to have come out of nowhere, the tip couldn't even scratch Set, who was flying around freely in the sky.

Even though they were both Demon Soldiers, unlike Cordo, who had both his hands turned into crab claws, aside from the scales, Minas had a normal human hand. Because of that, in terms of pure power, she was weaker than Cordo. However, this meant that she could use weapons that required human dexterity.

The effect of the simplified inheritance ceremony that the Bestir Empire used was that it was completely unknown what appearance the person would have until the ceremony was completed. The quality of the magic stone, the person's personality, physical condition, magic power and disposition. The compatibility between the magic stone and the person. They were all connected in complex ways that decided the ultimate appearance of the person. That is to say, Minas, who still kept her human appearance, had a good compatibility with her magic stone.

However, even if she had a compatible magic stone, it was still impossible to fight a Griffon.

Even though it was an A rank monster, as a Demon soldier, Minas never thought she could be defeated by one. However, her confidence collapsed as

soon as the fight started.

"This-! For a beast like you to be stronger than a Demon Soldier.....I will not admit it. I will not acknowledge it!"

Minas swung her whip while shouting.

Minas, who as a Demon Soldier, boasted a physical strength several times greater than that of a normal human, swung her whip around. The whip with that power behind it struck at Set at lightning speed. However, Set avoided or parried all her attacks with his forefeet.

"Gurururururu~!"

Pan-! The sound echoed into the surroundings.

But that was just the sound of the whip hitting the ground without hitting Set.

And when Set saw that, he would flap his wings and soar back up into the sky.

As soon as that happened, as Minas had no means of long range attack, she had to wait for Set to come back down again.

Set would freely fly in the air and attack Minas every time he saw an opportunity.

However, Set also had a handicap in a sense. This was currently downtown. There were also countless people watching him from Bolton's mansion. In such circumstances, he could carelessly use the skills he learnt from absorbing magic stones, which was a part of the Magic Beast Art. Set understood that what he could use was Size Transformation, which was easy to miss in the darkness of night. He might also be able to get away with using Poison Claws and trick the people watching him, but there was a possibility that the information could be leaked by the person struck by Poison Claw, so he couldn't really use that either.

"Gurururururu~!"

Deciding that there was no choice but to throw himself into melee, from a height of about 20m, Set started a steep descent towards Minas, who was brandishing her whip at him.

"So you've come!"

Minas waited, ready to tie Set up with her whip.....

"Haah!"

She swung her whip as soon as Set got within range. However.....

"Gururu~!"

With a sharp cry, Set used his Size Transformation skill and shrunk himself to 1m in a moment.

Most people would have felt a sense of incongruity at his sudden descent and barrel roll to avoid the whip, it was fortunate that no one could be sure that he had shrunk. Of course, Set had done the barrel roll aiming for that.

While avoiding the high speed whip by shrinking himself and doing a barrel roll, Set descended to Minas.

"Gurururururu~!"

As soon as he avoided the whip, he used his Size Transformation skill again to return to his original size.....

"Gururu~!"

Set made a horizontal swipe with his right claw .

"KAAA-!"

Of course, it wasn't an ordinary attack. It was a strike from Set, a Griffon. His power was brutal to say the least. Even though Minas was a Demon Soldier and was covered in scales, it couldn't stop the attack and was blasted 10m away, fainting from the impact.

This garden, which just a few minutes ago was filled with sounds of violent battle, was once again wrapped in the silence of the night as the battles ended.

Chapter 163

".....Now then."

Muttering to himself, Rei looked around the garden in Bolton's mansion.

The area around Rei and Cordo as well as Set and Minas had been messed up due to their fights. Still, it should be said that it was fortunate no one had died.

(Aside from me and Set.....should I say that it's lucky that none of the thugs or low ranked adventurers who were gathered near the gate came here out of curiosity.)

Rei thought that to himself. But in actual fact, most of the people who had gathered near the gate had already scattered all over the city as soon as they could to avoid getting further caught up in this uproar. Right now, only a few of them remained.

Even though there were very few people left, they should have heard the sounds of violent battle. But, they just stood quietly near the gate instead of curiously coming over to the other side of the gate. However, it could be said that the judgement of those who remained was correct. Anyhow, Bolton's mansion was in the upper class district where adventurers were hired to patrol around at night. In addition, a large number of thugs and adventurers had gathered there and sounds of battle had echoed into the surrounding. Because of that, patrols would eventually come around to inspect. If they did, they wouldn't just let the thugs and low ranked adventurers act as they wanted in the upper class district.

As a result, in short, almost all those who fled from the mansion were caught by the adventurers in the area,interrogated about the situation and detained for the night. As for the ones who had committed a variety of crimes, they were arrested.

"Set, sorry, but please watch these two. If they regain consciousness, just knock them out again."

"Guru~"

Putting the unconscious Cordo and Minas in one place and asking Set to guard them, Rei climbed a tree in the garden, holding the 2m long Death Scythe in one hand, and went back into the reception room through the wall that had been destroyed when he had first left.

As Rei entered the reception room again, he saw Bolton unable to move with Murt holding his halberd against him. Rei didn't know where the rope had come from but Postguerra had his hands and feet tied tightly and was also unable to move. Near Postguerra, some green gem like things rolled around.

"I've cleaned up my side.....but what is going on?"

".....We were cautious as you told us and were guarding both of them, but the moment it became disadvantageous for him, Postguerra took out those gems there. So I knocked him out and tied him up."

"I see. So he had those items on hand after all."

Rei picked up the green gems rolling around at his feet and looked at them for a few seconds before tossing them to Galahat.

(Well, it's rather unfortunate.....since everyone here has seen the gems, I can't just take them away.)

"We will probably be teleported if we use these gems. I don't know if they will transfer us to a fixed location or if they will transfer us to the place we want to. Either way, this is one way to confirm the level of the Bestir Empire's alchemy, so it would be better to pass this to Margrave Rowlocks along with Postguerra and the two in the garden.Can we contact him?"

"For now, I've sent a servant to the Margrave's residence."

".....Who was the servant? Will they believe him on that side?"

"They probably won't believe it at first, but it's still a message from someone working for the president of Azoth Firm. At the very least, several knights should come. If they see this, even if they don't want to, they would still have to believe it."

Galahat spoke in some distress. To Galahat, rather than have his brother killed by Rei.....he had caused this uproar. However, after entering the mansion, it had developed unexpectedly into underlings of the Bestir Empire being involved. After beating the bush to chase out the snake, it seemed like a dragon

had come out instead.

"In the worst case, Azoth Firm might be destroyed.If we're lucky, we might be allowed to survive, but it would be fully under the management of Margrave Rowlocks.....no, it would be under his control. Although that might be better for the people of the company than looking for other work."

"Galahat-san....."

Murt said Galahat's name anxiously as he held his halberd against Bolton. Murt tried to continue but someone else spoke up faster than him. It was Bolton, who still had a halberd held against him.

"D-Don't mess around with me! You want to destroy Azoth Firm, which has controlled all the weapons business in Gilm!? You want it to be put under the control of that greenhorn, Daska!? I will never permit such a thing!"

"....."

Galahat gave a sad look towards Bolton, who was disgracefully shouting.

"In the first place, none of this would have happened if you didn't conspire to drag me down from my position of president. You, repaying all the kindness I gave you with ingratitude. Ha-, after all, you're a child of a lowly concubine. You can't even return the favours you owe."

".....Shut up."

As he spoke, Bolton became more and more agitated. Bolton's voice of abuse towards Galahat gradually grew louder.

"You know, because of Azoth Firm, even though the city of Gilm is on the frontier, we can provide adequate weapons to adventurers. Tomorrow, when an adventurer dies due to lack of weapons, it will be all your fault....."

"I'm telling you to shut up, you damned asshole!"

Along with Murt's shout, Murt raised his halberd and swung the halberd head towards Bolton's face.....

Kin~!

There was a sharp metallic sound as the halberd head was just about to bury itself into Bolton's head.

"Stop it, Murt."

It was Galahat who had pulled out his sword.

"Why, Galahat-san! Such waste, he has no value. He's a waste of food and water! This guy, to treat Galahat-san like this until now....."

"Murt. I told you to stop. He's still my older brother....."

Saying that, he glanced towards Bolton, who had finally gone silent and was holding his breath, as he had just been on the verge of losing his life by a blow from a halberd. Galahat spoke to Rei, who had been watching the series of events silently.

"Rei, if I remember correctly, you promised that you would take everything from my older brother except his life. As you can see, my older brother has now lost everything. After this, he will be arrested by Margrave Rowlocks and made to talk about all his past evil deeds. He will never see the light of day after this.No, there is a possibility he might even be executed after he has spoken everything."

".....So, leave him be, is it?"

"Of course....."

"Ha-, hahahahaha, ahahahahaha, kahahahahaha-!"

When Galahat tried to reply to Rei, a loud burst of laughter echoed into the reception room.

The laugh that you could sense some insanity in it came from Postguerra, who had been tied up with rope and should have been unconscious.

"Ha, ha, ha.....haa, I'm laughing, I'm laughing. No, I didn't think I could laugh this much, you guys, maybe you have the makings of street performers? As soon as I woke up I hear of such laughable developments."

".....I'm sorry, but can you tell me what was so laughable?"

While saying that, Brazos asked Posguerra. Next to him, Freon watched in displeasure. If Postguerra said he was joking, Brazos would immediately break one or two of his bones.

"About that. Indeed the memories that you had when you were small are still effective until now.Galahat, did you say? You, you're one of the biggest

clowns I've ever seen."

".....A clown?"

When he were small, the memories he had, Galahat. Arranging those words in his head, Rei made a sharp look towards Bolton. Yes, there was only one thing he thought of from that chain of words. Why did Galahat not leave Azoth Firm even after being mistreated by Bolton? Rei had heard the reason himself.

Probably making a similar association to Rei, the faces of both Brazos and Freon tightened.

Only Murt didn't seem to be listening to Postguerra's words as he was desperately calming his anger against Bolton.

"Shut up! What are you saying in this last moment!"

He probably realising that Postguerra was trying to say something fatal to him. Bolton shouted at him, but Postguerra, who was tied down and could hardly move anything other than his mouth, spoke with a smile.

"Galahat, remember all the way back. Back to when you first started to feel a sense of gratitude towards that puppet over there. Your mother was sick and that puppet handed over some medicine to help it. Isn't that right?"

Puppet, Posguerra spook while referring to Bolton as such.

".....Ah."

"That disease. Green spots formed on the body and they would feel an intense itch right? There would be something like pus in the scratched spots and from there a green liquid with an intense odour would flow out. Instead of itching, there would intense pain instead then."

[.....]

At Postguerra's explanation, Rei, Freon and Brazos frowned their eyes as they thought about the description of the terrible disease.

"So, Bolton, who hated you, brought medicine. When you used that medicine, she would recover to a certain extent but she eventually died without fully recovering.Thinking about it carefully, didn't that mean that it forced her to live in suffering for a long period of time instead of curing her disease?"

"Shut up, shut up, shut up-! What are you going on about like this!"

Bolton shouted angrily, but it was already too late. On the other hand, even Murt had calmed himself and was now listening to Postguerra's story.

"You felt gratitude to that puppet who brought the medicine and devoted yourself to him up until today.Hey, Galahat. Do you want to know something? Do you think that puppet over there really gave the medicine out of kindness? And, why do you think I know so much about the disease so far?"

Postguerra gave a smile that could only be expressed as that of a shark.

"In other words, it might be fairly interesting to examine the contents of that bottle."

Next, he turned his eyes to the small bottle that Bolton had taken great care of. Judging that it could be evidence, when Bolton was arrested, Galahat had picked it up.....

".....Older brother."

"....."

"Hey, older brother. What he said.....is that true?"

"....."

At Galahat's question, Bolton replied with silence.

Normally, Bolton would claim that it was a lie, but seeing that Galahat held the small bottle, which was be definitive proof, he decided that it was useless to say anything.

Seeing Bolton like that, Galahat realised the truth. Galahat didn't say anything and just stayed quiet.

(This was the worst case.....I didn't think I was right on the mark.)

Rei gave a sigh in his mind.

Why did Galahat want to help his older brother to that extent. When Rei had heard the reason, he had considered it. But he had quickly denied it. Although he had thought that Bolton wouldn't go that far, if he had done that to keep Galahat under his control, his handling of Galahat was quite sloppy.

While looking at Galahat, Rei firstly walked towards Bolton.

"Hey, what is that? You, what are you coming over for?"

He saw Rei look at him like a stone on the roadside or a useless piece of junk. Bolton tried to move away, but the next moment.....

"Gah~!"

His foot that was about to stand up was swept away by Murt's halberd and Bolton's face hit the floor.

Bolton didn't suffer any injuries as he still trained himself as he grew older. If he were an ordinary elderly man, he would have definitely been injured. Bolton collapsed to the floor with enough momentum for Rei to think of that.

"W-What are you doing!"

Getting up, he scowled at Rei. However, Rei just looked back at him while Murt looked at Bolton as if he wasn't a human.

"You shut up for a bit."

Murt held down Bolton, who had fallen on the floor, by placing part of the halberd over his neck so he couldn't move.

Rei slowly approached Bolton.

"Cutting off your limbs, crushing your eyes, cutting off your nose, slicing off your ears.....I really considered that. But since I'll be handing you over to Margrave Rowlocks, I can't do that."

At Rei's words, which were spoken rather gently, Bolton had an expression of relief. However, that expression of relief collapsed the next moment.

"You traded with an alchemist of the Bestir Empire. What kind of means will Margrave Rowlocks reach for to extract information from you.....there's no need to think about it right? At that time, if you have no limbs, eyes, or anything else, how is the torturer supposed to do his job?"

From heaven to hell. Bolton just experienced that and had an expression of despair as he heard Rei's words.

Certainly, Margrave Daska Rowlocks was a military man who disliked underhanded tricks. However, if someone was connected to a foreign country which had the intention of attacking them and considering that the possibility of a lead was high, he wouldn't be that tolerant. No, as a military man, torture

and interrogation would be a simple thing to him.

"It seems you understand. Even so.....there's this. Take this with you."

Muttering, Rei began to say an incantation with his magic power.

[Flame, you are eternal hellfire. You are a flame that brings eternal pain and suffering. As time flows, let your host scream in pain and despair. Until your work is done in eternity.]

As Rei cast his magic, a flame appeared at the tip of the handle of the Death Scythe before being compressed down to a size of about 1cm with Rei's magic power.

It looked exactly like that kind of flame. It was like one of the other magics used by Rei, the [Seed of Contract]. They were like two peas in a pod. However, this magic was different. Instead of giving fire resistance in exchange for restrictions, this was a magic to torture someone with fire. Every time a new day started, the magic would bring a pain of being burned by fire until the flame itself acknowledged that the crime committed had been paid off. It was also a magic that would forcibly calm the mind if the person went crazy, just to inflict more pain.....

[Flame of Condemnation.]

A flame to condemn his crimes sank into Bolton's body through the handle of the Death Scythe.

Chapter 164

"Gyaaaa-.....ah.....ah?"

Bolton screamed as the flame that had been compressed to about 1cm in size was placed inside his body. But the next moment, realising he didn't feel any heat, he stood up to check his body.

Murt had been suppressing Bolton with his halberd a few seconds ago, but probably felt some danger from Rei's magic. He had already taken some distance away from Bolton.

".....Nothing, at all?"

He checked his body but there was no sort of burns on his body or clothes. But he was certain some kind of magic had been used.

"What did you do to me-!"

He didn't understand, he couldn't understand. The confusion made it easy for his blood to rush to his head, as a result, he made a hasty action.

With the Death Scythe on his shoulder, the young man, or rather, young boy, watched him with eyes as if he was garbage.....seeing that, Bolton instinctively raised his fist.....

"Gafu-!"

Rei avoided his fist without much difficulty and hit Bolton in the belly with the handle of the Death Scythe.

"Quiet down. This magic won't kill you. It is my magic so I can guarantee it."

(Well, your body will burn every time the date changes, so in a sense, you feel acute pain as if you were dying. Besides, you won't actually die and this magic will restore your mental state if you go crazy, so I didn't tell any lies.)

Thinking to himself, he continued his explanation.

"The flame put inside you will cause a severe pain that burns your body at regular periods.However, let's just say that you will be freed from it if it judges that your crimes have been compensated by your pain. "

"What!"

Bolton was at a loss at Rei's words. How many crimes had he committed during his life? Understanding that, he only had the expression of despair.

In addition, Brazos and Freon raised their eyes at the magic that was more brutal than they expected.

Still, they didn't complain to Rei because they understood how much cruelty Bolton had inflicted in his life.

"Physical pain from interrogators and torturers by day. Mental pain as if your body is burning by night.This is the consequence of the way you have lived. Enjoy it to your heart's content."

As Rei murmured that, one person jumped into the reception room.

"Master! Are you okay!"

It was an old man who looked about the same age as Bolton, or maybe older. As soon as he entered the room, he started shouting at Galahat with a stern gaze.

"Galahat! To disrespect the debt you owe to Master! Know your place!"

The shout of the old man wearing the clothes of a butler echoed in the reception room. Most people in the room frowned their eyes involuntarily.

"Who is this guy?"

It was Murt who responded to Freon's question.

Murt spoke while looking bitterly at the old male butler.

"He is the head butler of this mansion. He has been with Bolton ever since Bolton was a child."

".....I see."

Freon expressed her understanding at Murt's explanation.

She looked at the old aged butler, who was not much older than Bolton and had literally been brought up as Bolton's bodyguard. And.....

(Did this fellow spoil Bolton up until now, resulting in his current character?)

Because he could easily imagine how Bolton had been brought up until now, she clicked her tongue unintentionally.

His original duty was probably to remonstrate with his master, but he probably barely did that or didn't do that at all. Azoth Firm's past practices, it was not difficult to imagine it based on his behaviour when he entered the reception room.

"Galahat, what will you do with him? Do you plan to hand him over to the knights for now?"

Understanding how cruel the magic used on him was, Bolton was frozen in despair and Rei ignored him, turning to look at the butler who was staring at Galahat intensely.

"Ah, Ahh. That's right. Yes. Are you fine with that?"

Galahat was Galahat. Finding out that his mother's illness, which was the greatest reason why he continued to help his brother, was contrived by Bolton, he fell into a state of shock. He probably didn't know what his mind was thinking.

Rei gave a sigh and turned towards Murt.

"While Galahat is like this, you are the one who knows Bolton's mansion the best. What do you think we should do with this butler?"

".....That's right. As Bolton's confidant, I think he should know about a variety of things."

"Well then. Although this is a frontier city, it would be better if fewer people found out that the biggest business in the city is connected to the Bestir Empire."

"Ku-, hahahahaha. It's useless, useless, useless. You've caught me and that puppet over there, but there are many others like me that are meddling in this country. I'm just the tail of the lizard, the tip of the iceberg."

Postguerra talked proudly while still being tied up, but seeing that most people in the room were looking with cold eyes at someone else, he quietened down and clicked his tongue.

(Is this guy an idiot. Why would he bother to tell us that there are other

people lurking around besides himself?No, anyhow, the city of Gilm is far away from the border with the Bestir Empire. So, it's not difficult to guess that they are lurking in other cities.)

Even if this matter didn't come to light, Rei guessed that the hunting down of underlings of the Bestir Empire within the Mireana Kingdom would happen for a while. Spies themselves weren't uncommon, but if the underlings of the Bestir Empire were hidden immediately next to people of power, the story would be different.

"What are you doing! Release me, let me go! I am Bolton-sama's butler, don't touch me with your dirty hands, adventurer!"

"Yes, yes. Although my hands may be dirty.....if you say that to a woman, you'll have to bear the pain."

Freon had blue veins on her forehead at the butlers words and swung her sheathed long sword against the butlers legs. Maybe he was aiming for the moment the long sword was still in it's sheath or he had just forgotten about it. In any case, the butler fell on the spot after being smacked with the sheath and rolled on the floor groaning in pain.

And then.....

"Here!"

A man in his thirties entered the reception room while shouting.

Although the people inside though, again, as they turned to look at the door.....seeing that there was a knight wearing the armour belonging to the knights of the city of Gilm, they gave a sigh of relief.

"Mm.....?"

Having everyone suddenly concentrate their looks at him, the knight was confused for a moment and looked around the room while speaking.

"Oh.....please explain the situation."

The servants who had been sent to bring them over probably didn't explain any of the current circumstances. Freon and Brazos both turned to look at Galahat, but it looked like Galahat's mind was still elsewhere.

"Murt, Galahat is like this at the moment, so please explain for him."

"Ah? Ahh, I understand. Then, may I leave Bolton for the moment?"

"Mm."

Brazos nodded, but Rei interrupted as Murt approached the knight.

"Can I have a moment before this?"

"Mm? If I'm not mistaken, you've come to see Daska-sama several times.....was your name Rei?"

Fortunately, the man seemed to know Rei and gave a small nod. Rei pointed towards the hole in the wall of the reception room.

"You can see from the hole there, there are two unconscious people in the garden. You should secure them as soon as possible."

"Why? I haven't heard the details yet, but I don't think that would be any people with a higher importance than Bolton over there."

"Even if the ones fallen in the garden are what could be called the secret weapon of the Bestir Empire? "

".....What?"

The knight, who had been about to turn towards Bolton, stopped and asked back.

"I said they were the secret weapon of the Bestir Empire. To be exact....."

Speaking up to that, Rei wondered for a moment if he could talk about the inheritance ceremony. However, he judged that it would be better not to say anything stupid since Postguerra, an alchemist of the Bestir Empire, was nearby.

(It would be better if I just told this to Margrave Rowlocks later.)

"They were created by the alchemists of the Bestir Empire, like a chimera of humans and monsters."

"What!?"

At Rei's words, the knight understood how serious a matter it was. He hurriedly looked into the garden through the hole in the wall.

From there, he could see a woman with scales growing all over her body and someone with their upper body covered in a crab like shell and multiple

tentacles growing from their lower body. He could also see that both were unconscious and that a Griffon, Set, was watching the two of them.

".....It's as Rei said. Still, alchemists of the Bestir Empire. To go to such depraved means."

"Hahaha. What are you talking about. Technological advancements always comes with failure. No, rather, technology advances based on improving from failures?"

At the voice of the tied up Postguerra, the knight looked at him suspiciously.

"This person is?"

"What, did you just mention me just now? I'm that depraved person."

"-!? A Bestir Empire alchemist!?"

The knight revealed an expression of surprise when he saw the Demon Soldiers.

"This is.....how should I say this?"

"In other words, Azoth Firm....."

Rei muttered as he looked Galahat and rephrased his words.

"Bolton was connected to the Bestir Empire."

".....It's different, different, different! I Never thought he was an alchemist of the Bestir Empire. I never betrayed the Mireana Kingdom!"

Bolton realised that he would be considered a traitor if he left things as they were and kept shouting. However, since Postguerra was here, anything Bolton said would only be an excuse.

Seeing that, the knight thought about something for a few seconds before giving a small sigh and turning towards Murt.

"Sorry, prepare some paper and something to write with. I can't do anything by myself since it has become such a big deal. I have to consult with my superior and Daska-sama. I would like to go get them directly, but I cannot leave this place like this."

"Ah, Ahh. That is certainly true."

Murt brought out some paper and writing utensils and the knight wrote down

the rough circumstances, saying that a Bestir Empire alchemist had been captured, before giving it to the servant to bring back to the Margrave's residence.

After seeing him leave, the knight turned back to Rei again.

"As for the detailed story, I will hear it after my superior and backup arrives. Still, tell me roughly what happened so that I have an idea."

"Because Galahat-san is like that at the moment, I'll explain....."

Saying that, Murt spoke about the story and reasons leading up to the disturbance in the mansion.

While listening to the story, Rei stored the Death Scythe into the Misty Ring and went towards Galahat, who was still out of it.

"....."

Galahat looked at Rei approach but his eyes were out of focus. Seeing that, Rei eventually clenched his fist with a sigh.

"That's enough.....snap out of it!"

Although he wasn't serious, it wasn't a soft blow either. In other words, he punched Galahat in the belly with enough force to knock a normal person out.

"Guh!"

Galahat knelt on the floor with a groan. Rei grabbed both his shoulders and forcibly lifted him up.

"Shouldn't you have known for a long time that Bolton was someone like this? In fact, you have seen how he has treated others up until now. With all that, do you intend to escape from reality now that it's your turn?"

Rei lightly hit Galahat's cheeks with the palm of his hand.

Although the blood rushed to Murt's head and he tried to raise a complaint at Rei's aggressive attitude, Brazos and Freon held him back.

1 slap, 2 slaps, 3 slaps, 4 slaps.

Each time a light pan~ pan~ sound echoed into the surroundings.

And gradually, Galahat's eyes returned to focus and he stretched out to catch

Rei's arm.

".....It's okay now. I'm sorry, I made you worry."

"I'm not particularly worried. This matter might have been caused by me, but you were the one that actually took action. Please take proper responsibility of this to the end."

"Ah. That's right. A variety of unexpected things happened, but this is certainly what I started. I will fulfill my responsibilities to the end."

Thus, although Galahat hadn't fully recovered from finding out that he had been betrayed by his loved brother, he still gathered himself and started explaining to the knight with Murt.

The other three, Rei, Brazos and Freon, finally finished their work and gave a sigh of relief that they could finally rest as they watched the situation.

Chapter 165

".....It got quite messy as expected."

"That's true. No one would think that Azoth Firm, the largest business in this city, would have half collapsed overnight while they were asleep."

At Rei's words, Freon gave a wry smile while dipping her firmly baked bread into a stew with plenty of meat and vegetables.

"Anyone who saw the disturbance in this inn yesterday might have been able to expect what happened to some extent. This inn serves delicious meals so some customers come just for it."

Although it was morning, Brazos spoke while drinking the liquor in his cup with relish.

"Drinking in the morning.....no, well, since we're planning to take the entire day off today, that's fine."

Sunlight fell through the windows in the dinning room, though it couldn't be called the morning light as it was already starting to get close to noon. Freon gave a sigh as she saw that.

"It's almost noon. I'm not so irritated anymore. I'm not even yelling at that guy any more. Even though he's drinking it more like water than wine."

".....The liquor is good."

Giving a sigh again, she turned towards Rei in resignation.

"So, first is this."

Rei received a small cloth bag from Freon. Looking inside, there were six platinum coins.

".....This is?"

"You promised Galahat, didn't you? You didn't kill any adventurers hired by Azoth Firm. This is the reward."

"That should have been two platinum coins, why are there six?"

"Ah.....the other four were collected by Brazos and me from the knight leaders and knights."

"Is it to keep quiet about it?"

"I wonder. After explaining all the circumstances last night, we went home. So, a person from the knights came to this inn early this morning and left this money here. We stayed here because it was already late last night. I collected it after I woke up this morning."

Even for Daska, it must have been surprising that Azoth Firm, which could be considered the biggest business in the city he governed, would be corrupted by the Bestir Empire. Even though Rei listened closely to the gossip in the dinning room, they were mostly about the change in the leadership of Azoth Firm. Words such as the Bestir Empire and alchemists did not appear.

"Well, the nobles have their honour. It's probably different for Margrave Rowlocks though. Perhaps he'll use this opportunity to clean out the spies of the Bestir Empire lurking in the city."

".....I see. Well, here is just the frontier border and not the Imperial Capital."

Rei nodded as he brought the stew to his mouth.

If this was the Imperial Capital, even if all the Bestir Empire spies were caught at once, there was no doubt more would be sent to collect information. But since Gilm was a frontier city, the Bestir Empire probably judged it to not be as important.

Of course, there was no doubt that spies would be sent again, but it should still be a fair amount of time before they would be sent. There would be no problem if countermeasures against spies were made during that time.

".....So, did you ask about what will happen to Azoth Firm in the future?"

While storing the cloth bag holding 6 platinum coins into the Misty Ring, Rei asked Freon.

Freon nodded while frowning slightly at Rei question.

"Ah. Although it hasn't been officially decided yet, it will be rough."

".....Will it be dissolved?"

The president at the top of the company was connected to alchemists from the Bestir Empire. He probably didn't know they were from the Bestir Empire, but his crimes were still heavy. Thinking that, Rei asked Freon, but she

unexpectedly shook her head.

"It seems that Azoth Firm will remain.However, it seems subordinates of Margrave Rowlocks will be sent over under the role of consultants."

"So effectively, they are government inspectors.To put it nicely, they are supervisors."

Brazos pointed that out as he poured more liquor into his cup. Rei looked surprised at their words.

"That's surprising. After causing such a commotion and making such mistakes. At the very least, I thought that Azoth Firm would fall under the direct control of the Margrave at the very least.....although supervisors are being dispatched, it is unexpected that they would survive as they are."

"Rei is also involved in this you know."

".....Me?"

"Ahh. To state the facts, weren't you were hired by Galahat and captured the Bestir Empire alchemist as well as those strange hybrids? In short, since the internal circumstances of Azoth Firm have been sorted out, Galahat petitioned the Margrave saying that Azoth Firm has cleaned itself and is functioning properly.....that seems to be what happened."

"Well then. The internal situation in Azoth Firm won't thoughtlessly fall into confusion, he probably doesn't want to stop the trade of weapons in the city of Gilm. If it fell under the direct control of the Margrave, various things naturally have to change. If you are in a city it would be relatively safe, but this is the frontier. If any disruption happened to the weapons trade, adventurers would be the ones affected. That would have the same effect as reducing Gilm's force that is capable of fighting monsters."

"I see. I understand. By the way, is Galahat still the representative for Azoth Firm?"

"Ahh, that seems to be the case.Also, there was a message from that knight. The Margrave would like you to head over to his residence as soon as possible."

"Ah, okay, Well, there was something I wanted to talk about. Should I talk to you about it or not though."

"What do you want to talk about?"

"Don't worry about it. It's better if you don't know."

Saying that, Rei brought the last of the stew to his mouth and finished the bread with some fresh water.

"Now then, I'll head over to the Margrave's residence right away.....what about you two?"

"I'll be drinking here for a while."

"I'll head back to the inn and enjoy a nice rest."

"Is that so. Then, is tomorrow morning okay to strip the Harpy materials?"

"Mm. We'll meet up here."

Deciding on their plans, Rei headed for the Margrave's residence as soon as he could.

"I'm Rei, a D rank adventurer. I was summoned by the Margrave."

About 30 minutes after leaving the inn, Rei arrived at the front gate of the Margrave's residence.

Incidentally, today was one of the rare days Rei was by himself, Set wasn't around. Actually, Rei had gone to pick him up, but unusually, Set was still sleeping.

Although Set woke up when Rei came to find him, when asked if he wanted to come along, Set had shook his head and laid back down. Because of that, Rei had come out by himself.

And without a big identifier like Set, Rei wasn't so conspicuous. If he had been holding the Death Scythe, it might have been different, but the scythe was currently stored inside the Misty Ring.

"Mm, give me a moment."

The gatekeeper, who was already familiar with Rei's face, nodded and immediately sent a person back to the mansion. In less than a few minutes, a person came to guide him to the Margrave's office, where Rei had been several times before.

"It was hard on you yesterday. Here, take a seat."

Daska said that to Rei as he sat down on a sofa. Giving a small bow, Rei sat down on the opposite sofa.

"Pardon me."

"Ah. So, yes.Wait a moment. Hey, bring some drinks and light snacks. This might be a long story."

"Certainly."

The butler nodded at Daska's words and left the room.

Seeing that, Daska spoke while looking through the documents he had.

"We'll leave the details until after the drinks arrive. Take it slow until then. I have to take a look through the papers over there as well."

In the direction he was looking in, a 10cm thick stack of documents was on his desk.

Seeing the amount of documents, Rei spoke in surprise.

".....That's an amazing number of documents."

"Mm? Ah. That's for sure. I usually don't have half of this, but because of yesterday's various issues.I am someone more suited to moving my body than paperwork."

Daska gave a sigh, he certainly looked more like a military officer than a civil servant. A trained body and tough looking face. With his sharp eyes, he was clearly a military man. That said, he wasn't just a military man, this could be seen from the fact that he was a central figure among the Neutral Faction and ruled the city of Gilm successfully.

"Seriously, it was more comfortable when I worked with the knights. I thought it would be comfortable after my father retired and I took over the seat Margrave Rowlocks.....looking at it like this, nobles are constrained in various ways. That's especially so as the head of a margrave household. How about it? Would you like to become a noble?"

Though he said it like a joke, Daska looked at Rei with a serious expression.

If he wanted a strong force like Rei, the easiest method was to put Rei under himself as a noble. In his position as a margrave, it wouldn't be difficult for Daska to use his influence in the Neutral Faction to lay the groundwork in the Imperial Capital to appoint someone a baron or viscount in recognition of their services.

"You won't be granted any land, but you would be considered one of my subordinates."

"No, I don't feel like becoming a noble.In the first place, I don't think someone who lacks etiquette like me would be able to get along with others in an aristocratic society."

"Etiquette? You don't need to worry about that. Look at me. I don't want to boast about it, but I was born to the house of a margrave on the frontier. In the Imperial Capital, I was slandered by others as lacking manners."

".....I'm sorry. I'm an adventurer myself. I would like to explore my path as a magic warrior."

Although Rei was polite, Daska still gave a small sigh at Rei's firm refusal to become a noble.

"Well, it can't be helped. I can't force you to say something you don't want."

That said, Daska was satisfied after understanding that Rei didn't want to become a noble.

(At the very least, if he doesn't want to become a noble, there's no danger of getting pulled in to other factions. If he stays an adventurer, the city of Gilm should remain as his base. Although I can't say for sure, it will be good to consider him as a fighting force in the case of an emergency. I shouldn't try to force aggressively but rather stay content with maintaining the current situation.)

"Pardon me. I have brought tea and snacks."

As Daska thought to himself contentedly, there was a knock on the door and the butler came in. Pushing a cart over to the table side, he placed cups of tea onto the table.

"Daska-sama, do you want anything else?"

"No, it's fine. Thanks for your hard work. You may leave."

"Yes, please excuse me."

Giving a respectful bow, the butler left the room.

Seeing him off, Daska left the documents he was reading on his office desk, sat down on the sofa and turned to Rei.

After drinking some tea, he spoke with a serious expression.

".....Now then. Firstly is yesterday's matter, it was difficult in a variety of ways. Thanks to Rei, we managed to capture an alchemist of the Bestir Empire as well as their secret weapon. Because of that, about the secret weapon. From the report, you seem to know something about them?"

"Yes. It's convenient that you called me over today because it's necessary to talk about it. As Daska-sama knows, I went to a dungeon a while ago. I think you also know that I headed to the alter of inheritance in it."

Daska gave a small nod at Rei's words and prompted him to continue.

"I heard the story from Elena-dono, does this have anything to do with that?"

"The inheritance ceremony needs to be carried out at an alter of inheritance. However, I was told that the Bestir Empire had developed a method that could be considered a simplified version of it....."

"Wait. That means."

Daska interrupted Rei's words. In his mind, he thought of the people who had been carried over to the Margrave's residence last night. The figure of Cordo, who was all covered in a shell, and Minas, who had scales growing all over her body.

"Yes. They are Demon Soldiers."

"Demon Soldiers? Their appearances certainly aren't human.....still, even though it's a simplified version, compared to Elena-dono whose appearance didn't change at all, this is very different."

"I agree. It's probably a limitation of the simplified version.However, since Minas and Cordo look quite different in terms of appearance, there is a possibility that there might still be issues even though it is a simplified version of the inheritance ceremony."

"Speaking about this, I will check up on this in the Imperial Capital. I will take that alchemist Postguerra along."

".....You won't investigate it here?"

"It's a case that is too big to investigate in my territory. It's attractive to monopolise the information, but if the country is destroyed because I prioritised the power struggle, I wouldn't be able to bear that. To interrogate and analyse the information about the Demon Soldiers, it will be done with

people from the Royal and Nobles Factions as well.However, it has been determined that this case will also increase the influence of the Neutral Faction. I have to thank you for this matter. Thank you very much."

Grinning, Daska brought a sandwich to his mouth with a big smile as he said that.

Seeing that, Rei also reached for a sandwich.

"No, I also live in the city of Gilm. I would be troubled if the Mireana Kingdom was occupied by the Bestir Empire.That reminds me, I heard that Azoth Firm ended up surviving as it is."

"Ahh. There are many things to consider, but I left it as it was and didn't dissolve it, there would be no confusion in the city. I couldn't be helped so I ended up sending people over to watch it."

"Well, Bolton seems to have done a lot of vicious things. Still, that's fine."

After that, Rei provided information about the abilities of the Demon Soldiers Minas and Cordo as well as the magic items for teleportation that Postguerra had on him. Rei and Daska's discussion finished roughly an hour later.

Chapter 166

".....Demon Soldiers, is it."

After Rei left, it became quiet in the Margrave's office in his residence. Daska murmured as he brought the already cold tea to his mouth before calling out towards the door to an adjoining room.

"Hey, what do you think?"

When he called out, the door opened without a sound and a man walked in. He was the Knight Leader who was in charge of maintaining Gilm's public order. However, the man's character was more like that of a shadow who worked behind the scenes than a Knight Leader. That was natural. This man was only a Knight Leader in name, he actually worked in the shadows of the city of Gilm under Daska.

"To be honest, it's hard to say. Anyhow, once the two of them, Minas and Cordo, realised they were captured, they started raging about violently."

".....I wonder."

Daska's mind drifted back to the report that was made from previous night.....or rather, very early this morning.

The two demon soldiers had been brought to the dungeons in the Margrave's residence while they still knocked out by Rei and Set. However, they started rampaging violently and tried to escape from the dungeon once they realised where they were. As a result, while nobody died, several knights and soldiers were injured and had to be treated with healing magic.

"I didn't think the sounds would make it this far."

Daska spoke with a bitter smile while bringing the remaining sandwiches to his mouth.

The screams and roars had echoed all the way to the Margrave's residence

Normally, the Lord's residence and the Knight Order's base would be in separate locations. However, since Gilm was on the frontier and the city itself could be attacked by groups of monsters, the Margrave's residence also

functioned as a fortress to evacuate the inhabitants of the city. As a result, the Knight Order had also built its base in it.

"So, how about the information?"

Daska had told Rei that they would be interrogated after being brought to the Imperial Capital, but of course, he didn't mean it seriously. No, it was definitely true that they would be interrogated together with the Royalists and Nobles after they got to the Imperial Capital, but Daska was going to squeeze out as much information out of them as possible before that. As a central figure in the smallest faction among the three that existed, it was the proper decision to stop them from losing the initiative.

However, the man shook his head at Daska's question.

"It's no use. Did you call them Demon Soldiers? Those two are too dangerous if they get out of hand. If you absolutely want to get information, there's the alchemist....."

"Is that no use as well?"

"Ehh. We are just frontier knights.To be blunt, we've put a lot of effort into our combat strength, but we're not suitable for things such as interrogation."

"Well, it can't be helped. This is the frontier. I didn't think that the Bestir Empire would reach their hands as far as here.No, could it be the opposite, because this is the frontier?"

"Daska-sama?"

"....."

Muttering, Daska closed his eyes and started thinking.

When the knight saw that, he kept quiet so as to not disturb the Margrave's thoughts.

Daska opened his eyes about a minute later.

"I see, is that their aim?"

"Have you thought of something?"

".....It's only a guess. Needless to say, the city of Gilm is a frontier city. And because it is on the frontier, a wide variety of monster materials are gathered here. There are also materials that are rarely available in the Imperial Capital. In addition, a dungeon has also appeared near here."

"That is true."

"In other words, the materials exported by Azoth Firm from the city of Gilm are materials unique to the Mireana Kingdom.....even if they aren't, they would still be valuable or have useful qualities. What if they all started flowing to the Bestir Empire?"

At Daska's speculation, the knight held his breath.

"The materials to make powerful weapons, armour and magic items, that should have become the strength of the Mireana Kingdom, would be collected by the Bestir Empire. That's definitely a clever way of thinking. But then why did they choose Azoth Firm as their trading partner? It probably isn't something the alchemist would know anyway."

"I see, that sounds about right. Then we should mainly look at materials with a higher rarity.Alright then, investigate it. Trading partners of Azoth Firm that have concentrated on purchasing expensive materials. Suspicious companies, merchants or traitorous nobles that might have connections with the Bestir Empire."

"I understand!"

With a quick salute, the knight left the office. Daska murmured with a fierce smile.

"Bestir Empire, aren't you having fun doing your dirty business in my city. I will express my gratitude to you when the war starts next spring."

He gave a smile like a large carnivorous beast looking at it's prey.

"Oh, Rei-san. You came at the right time. A group of people who want to be interviewed are waiting for you."

After finishing his report at the Margrave's residence, Rei quickly headed to the guild, where he was met by a smiling Lenora.

Because it was just past noon, Lenora was the only one currently at the guild reception. The figure of Kenny, who would usually make advances on him, couldn't be seen.

(Well, compared to having things like money or a higher rank, it's not a bad feeling to be liked by a beautiful woman.)

While thinking to himself, he gave a small nod towards Lenora.

"Are they upstairs?"

"Yes.I'm sure you will be surprised."

Looking puzzled at Lenora's words, he was told to go up if he wanted to know as he went up to the meeting room on the second floor.

And the people who greeted him when he entered the meeting room were.....

"You're late! Seriously, we've been waiting since noon!"

A female thief yelled at Rei as soon as she saw him.

"Rei has been busy with various things, it can't be helped."

A male mage calmed the female thief down.

".....Hmph~"

There were three people, including a male swordsman who looked at Rei grumpily.

(.....I see.)

Rei came to a realisation. It was because he knew the three people who were sitting in the room.

The female thief was Culotte. The mage was Scola. The swordsman was Arogan. The three of them had taken their rank up test along with Rei, adventurers of the batch so to speak.

"That was really unexpected for you all to take my request."

"Ahahahaha. There are some circumstances and we don't have enough money."

At Rei's words, Scola gave a bitter smile as he scratched his cheeks.

"Money?"

"Yes. It's fine to fight monsters as part of requests, but our weapons and armour are reaching the end of their use. Right now, we're having new ones made. Because of that, we obviously can't take any dangerous requests during this time. We have take up requests that are either in the city or can be done near the city....."

"So you found my request."

"Yes, yes.So, how about it?"

"I see."

(From the rank up test, I know what their characters are like. And since they know me as well, they won't try to do things like cheat me of materials.)

"Well, that's fine. I'll be relying on you then.That reminds me, the three of you said that you would form a party, what's the name of your party?"

It was Culotte who responded to Rei's question, that he had suddenly thought of.

"That reminds me, I never told you. Our party name is[Eternal Power]. Nice to work with you."

"Eternal Power? That's a surprisingly bold party name. "

"What, are you complaining about it!?"

"Don't get so hot headed. That part of you has hardly changed from when we took the rank up test."

"Mm....."

At Rei's words, it seemed he recalled the advice that Gran, their rank up test examiner, had given him after their test. Culotte frowned her eyes slightly.

"Well, that's how it is. As Scola said earlier, we're taking on requests close to the city for now."

".....Why bother to head out of the city? It's not that much of an issue to do it inside the city."

Rei gave a sigh towards Arogan, who was avoiding eye contact with Rei.

Originally, Arogan had despised Rei's ability, picked a fight with him and lost easily. After that, having met with Rei again in the rank up test, he was a bit afraid of Rei's abilities. However, he took such an attitude because he didn't want to admit it. Rei understood the general reason for his behaviour and so explained after a sigh.

"As written in the request form, there's a massive number of monster corpses in my item box. Try stripping materials from such a large number of monsters in the city. There's a possibility we'll get knights or guards called on us if

somebody sees us. Even if that doesn't happen, the smell of blood and entrails will be quite shocking.In addition, the knights are busy today."

"Ahh, that reminds me. I heard that Azoth Firm caused some trouble and the knights had to intercede."

"I see. So the news spread out like that."

At Scola's words, Rei muttered to himself. Culotte, who's senses were a bit sharper, asked Rei.

"Wait, were you by any chance involved in the uproar that happened last night?"

"Well, if you're asking if I was involved, I was. However, there's various things I can't talk about right now."

".....I thought you'd say that. Well, that's okay. Azoth Firm has only had a bad reputation up until now. At the very least, it can't be worse than what it was before."

"That's how it is. Getting back to the main story, there are also some high ranking monsters written in the request form. Do you know how to strip materials from them?"

"Well, I'll leave that information to Scola.....how about it?"

Looking towards him, Scola gave a small nod.

"I know the methods to strip materials from most monsters, by the way, what are they specifically?"

"The highest ranking one is a B rank Spriggan. The others are rank C, Emerald Wolves and Ogres."

".....You, where the hell did you kill such high ranking monsters. B rank monsters aren't things you can encounter so easily. Even C rank monsters, they would be hard to find around here. Did you go into the Forest of Monsters?"

Hearing Rei's words, Culotte was stunned at the rank of the monsters they had to strip materials from. However, Rei answered the question as if it was nothing.

"I went to a dungeon just a while ago. These are the monsters that were killed then."

"A dungeon.....is it the closest one to the city of Gilm?"

"Ahh. I had request for it. It was seriously tough but there was a corresponding harvest."

The figure of Kuust appeared in his mind. Their relationship could be considered a hate-hate one. However, if someone asked Rei if Kuust deserved an end like being betrayed and killed by a companion whom he had been friends with and worked together with for a long time, Rei would answer no without a doubt.

"Rei?"

Should he say, as expected of a thief, Culotte noticed Rei's momentary expression. She called out to Rei with a puzzled expression.

Shaking his head at Culotte, he got back to the main topic.

"No, it's nothing. That's right. Can you strip materials from monsters including the Spriggan? You could say you passed the interview just before, but if you can't the strip materials from them....."

"Ah, that's fine. I haven't actually stripped the materials from one, but I think I'll manage somehow since there are step by step instructions written in the book I have, which was written by people who have stripped materials from high ranking monsters."

Scola interrupted Rei's words.

"I'll point out where and how to strip the materials, so Culotte should be fine. If a bit more force is needed, Arogan can do it. How about that?"

"Ahh, I don't mind how you do it. Still, it's surprising that you can assign roles quite precisely now."

"That's because we're all members of the same party."

As soon as the main discussion was finished, Rei stood up. Culotte stood up after him.

"Well then. I will ask the D rank party, Eternal Power, to take my request. Do you mind if we head out of the city immediately?"

"Eh? So soon? No, well, we're free after this anyway."

"Yes, I don't have any issues. Arogan?"

".....Do as you want."

Deciding to promptly complete the request, they headed down to the first floor of the guild.

"Ah, Rei-kun. I was just asking Lenora, how was the interview?"

As soon as Rei reached the first floor, Kenny saw him from the reception desks and called out. The figure of Lenora, who was here just before, could not be seen. Kenny was currently the only one at reception.

Guessing that Lenora had probably swapped out to eat lunch, he brought Eternal Power with him as he headed over to the counter.

"The request to strip materials. Since the three of them will be accepting it, I'll leave the procedures to you. We'll be stripping materials from the monsters out the city right away."

"That request? I think that there were several other people who wanted to be interviewed.....is that fine?"

"Ah. These three were the first to be interviewed. Fortunately, we took our rank up test together, so I'm acquainted with them."

".....Ah."

For a moment, Kenny looked at Arogan. Perhaps she remembered that he had picked a fight with Rei in the guild before getting defeated straight after. Arogan probably realised it and seemed to be unhappy, but as expected, he stayed silent and didn't say anything.

After Rei finished the request procedures, he left the guild with Eternal Power while avoiding Kenny's enticements.

Chapter 167

"Oh, this is quite unusual. Set isn't with you today?"

At the main gate of Gilm, Rei nodded at the familiar face of Ranga as he took his guild card out of the Misty Ring and handed it over.

"Yeah. He was kinda sleepy, he should still be sleeping at the stables of the inn."

Technically, the Griffons had almost no need for sleep. However, that didn't mean that they couldn't. In the end, it wasn't a necessity to sleep, but the act of sleeping itself was still plenty enjoyable. Especially since Set wasn't a natural-born monster but a Griffon born from the Magic Beast Art, he enjoyed his sleep.

"Is that so. So, you are with those three today?"

"Yes. But we're not doing a request together but a request that I issued."

"That you issued?"

"It's a request to strip the materials from the monsters I killed. Since there are so many of them, doing them by myself would be difficult, so I posted a request in the Guild. Because of the large quantity, doing it in the city would be dangerous. Because of that, we are going to do it somewhere a bit further from here."

"...You sure that's a good idea? If you stray too far from the city, monsters will be attracted by the smell of blood."

Ranga asked him in worry, but Rei gave a smile.

"These guys are D ranked adventures, so any monsters around this town wouldn't be a problem. Plus I'm also going with them."

Rei replied as he received his Guild Card back.

(I thought I'd leave everything to them when I issued the request, but after thinking about it, I decided it would be a good chance to learn how to strip off monsters that aren't included in my beginner's book. Fortunately, Scola seems to know how to strip materials from most monsters.)

He nodded at himself in his mind while looking at the other three, who were having their Guild Cards checked by other guards.

"Is that so. Well, be careful then. ...Oh right, I almost forgot to say this. You were a great help with the yesterday's matter."

Rei tilted his head due to suddenly being told that.

"Yesterday's matter?"

"Yes. Talking about the Azoth Firm. Even we were told many unreasonable things until now. We're delighted that we don't have to go through that anymore."

Rei wondered why he knew about it, but it was the knight order that did the investigation. He judged that it wasn't so surprising that Ranga, being the guard captain, was aware of that information.

"It was partly just the course of events that led to it, so don't worry too much about it. Rather, are we free to go?"

"Yes, no problems here. Then, take care. It would be dangerous to let down your guard, even if it's you we're talking about."

After being told so by Ranga, Rei left the town along with Culotte and the others who also finished their procedures.

He saw a caravan headed towards Gilm, but seeing as they were likely involved with the Azoth Firm's weapon trade, they were going to be in for quite a surprise. Rei smiled while thinking of that.

"So, we've left the city but how far are we supposed to go exactly?"

"Hmm, well, at the very least, any place where people entering the town won't see the blood would do..."

Rei glanced towards the woods located beside the highway.

When it came to forests, since they were full of trees, monsters were bound to live there. However, taking into account that it was close to the city, there should only be low-rank monsters there. Rei judged that to be the case and headed towards the woods while still taking out his Death Scythe just in case.

"Inside those woods it is. Even if anything is attracted by the smell of blood, they would just be low-rank monsters or wild animals, and they can clean up all the monster parts that we don't need if we just leave them there. No well, I still plan to clean things up as much as I can."

"True, even without extra weapons and armour we can still somehow deal with the nearby monsters. Arogan, your magic sword has the highest offensive power among us, so I'll be expecting good work from you if push comes to shove."

"Hmph. I think my magic sword is too good for those small fries. But, fine."

Arogan showed a confident smile as he lightly tapped at the scabbard of his magic sword hanging from his side. However, even that smile of his hardened with Culotte's following line.

"Well, with Rei being here, no nearby monsters can be our opponents anyway."

"...Culotte. Why are you saying things that will crush your comrade's spirit like that..."

"Eh? Did I say something strange?"

"No, it's fine. That's how Culotte is."

They walked into the woods for about ten minutes while continuing their silly chatter. Rei's group discovered a water source that was narrow, but still wide enough to be called a river, and decided to do their work there.

"It's not that cold now since it's still noon, but the evenings this season tend to be quite cold. Let's try to finish it as soon as we can."

"That's true. When it's cold, having a burning hot soup and drinking it as it cools down feels great. Let's do our best today for a tasty evening meal. Rei, Take out the monsters."

"Right. Then, we'll start with this for now. The magic stone has already been removed so I'll be leaving the rest to you."

Saying that, Rei took out the Ogre corpse from the Misty Ring. Its head was severed starting from its right shoulder, and the blood was also fully drained.

Seeing that, Scola gave a small nod.

"Wow, this is big even for an Ogre. We don't have to worry about draining its blood, this looks like it will be an easy job. Arogan, deal with its skin. Culotte, you take its right ear, which is the proof of subjugation, and the skull, which fetches a high price. ...Also, don't forget the tendons in its legs, they can also be sold at a high price. It's sad, but that's all the materials we can get from this one. What do we do with its flesh? Just saying, if you plan to sell a C rank monster's flesh, it can be sold at a considerably high price."

Rei looked with admiration at Aragon's skill, as he quickly removed its skin, and Culotte, who was dealing with its head, following Scola's instruction. However, Scola's question brought back his attention.

"Y-Yes. Sorry, but can you cut it up into sizable chunks. After all, I've got a monster with me. I'll use it as food for him."

"Ah, you mean Set. There have been various rumours about him in the city."

It seemed that even they had heard rumours about Rei and Set after all, given that they were also working as adventurers in Gilm.

Scola spoke while skinning the Ogre's right arm with a knife after he finished giving instructions.

Rei nodded as he observed the three, making mental notes about the proper way of removing skin, what materials could be sold and other things.

"He's got a big body, after all. The amount of food he needs is correspondingly large."

"...That's true."

After Scola nodded, they barely talked any more and merely concentrated on removing the skin, and thus the surroundings got wrapped in silence.

Meanwhile, since the blood drifting around was bound to cause some sort of effect, Rei had been acting vigilantly towards the surroundings. However, perhaps it should be expected from their skill, he still couldn't hide his surprise when he witnessed that gigantic Ogre being taken apart in less than 30 minutes.

Afterwards, they dug an appropriately deep hole and threw everything

unusable, mainly internal organs and bones, into it before moving on to the next one.

"Next is...this one, it's not a high ranked monster, but there's a lot of them."

While saying that, he took out the Water Monkeys from the Misty Ring.

Seeing the monsters appearing one after another without stop, all the members of Eternal Power were dumbfounded. In the end, Scola came to his senses first.

"Um, sorry. I didn't expect this amount. ...Give me a minute. These are Water Monkeys, right? First would be its fur that has water resistance. Its right ear is the proof of subjugation. These are the only valuable things I guess."

When Scola told him that, Rei knit his brows.

"My book said that their eyes would also be sold as materials though?"

"Eh? Wait a minute. Uhh... Their eyeballs aren't of any use from what I know. Can you show me your book for a bit, Rei? Ah, Culotte and Argon deal with the blood draining for now."

"Sure. Setting aside the eyes, for now, I'll cut off all of their right ears. ...Hey, Rei. What about their Magic Stones?"

Rei gave Culotte a small nod as he retrieved the book from the Misty Ring.

"Unlike the Ogre, I haven't collected the Magic Stones from them, so I entrust that to you."

"Got it. ...Even so, what a crazy number of them. Did you really defeat all of these, Rei?"

While leaking a little mutter, she proceeded to hang the Water Monkeys by their ankles on the rope she prepared in advance. Arogan as well, despite the number of monsters making him tedious, hanged them upside down on the nearby trees and slit their throats to drain blood.

"Good grief. Usually, you wouldn't carry so many monster corpses around, not to mention that they'd even rot. This is why the Item Box holders are so..."

Culotte and Arogan. These two had some similar aspects to each other.

As Rei thought so, he opened the book in hand and showed the page that depicted Water Monkeys to Scola.

"Look, it clearly says that eyeballs can also be sold."

"...Hmm, you are right. But the book I have didn't say anything about eyeballs. I think the one who wrote either this or my book has made a transcribing error."

Scola muttered with a sigh.

In this other world of Elgin, where the printing technology hadn't been invented, books were mainly manuscripts. With that being the case, it was no surprise for the writers of those manuscripts to make mistakes.

"...What should we do?"

"Well, Let's take them in any case. There's a lot of them, after all. It would be quite a loss if we didn't take them but later it turned out that they were actually sellable."

"Okay, got it. Do you have a container to store them?"

"Yeah."

After all, Rei had the Misty Ring – a magic item that could be said to be a cheat item in a way. Taking into account that it could even store the corpses of defeated monsters, he had quite a lot of consumables prepared to be used for stripping materials. Especially now that he had already known about the number of defeated monsters in the Dungeon, he didn't make any mistakes with his preparations.

He took out containers for the eyes one after another and gathered them on the ground.

"Then, let's pick up the pace. Eyeballs need a certain level of delicate approach, so I'll take over that job. I'll also deal with their right ears that serve as proofs of subjugation. Culotte you deal with skinning and Arogan you cut up its flesh and collect the Magic Stones."

Following his instructions, they proceeded to strip materials off the Water Monkey corpses that were already drained of blood. You could almost call it

machine-like precision. It was honestly an order of magnitude better than what Rei, who felt that he had become skilled at stripping materials in his own way lately, was capable of.

Meanwhile, Rei continued storing all the eyeballs, skins and Magic Stones that they obtained inside the Misty Ring one after another. Naturally, the useless internal organs were thrown into a hole similar to the Ogre's.

While their individual heights didn't even reach up to the Ogre's knees, their numbers easily surpassed 50. Because of that, by the time they finished stripping materials from every single Water Money, almost two hours had already passed.

"...It's donee!"

After being done with stripping the materials from the final Water Monkey, Culotte shouted without thinking.

It couldn't be helped since they've been stripping materials from the same type of monster all this time. She washed her hands and rinsed the attached blood in the nearby river.

"Good work. Let's take a little rest for now. Here, drink this."

Saying that, Rei and took out the meat and vegetable soup from the Misty Ring, put it onto plates and distributed it to everyone.

Even Aragon who wasn't on such good terms with Rei accepted it without a single complaint. Perhaps it was proof that he also wanted to take a break. After they washed all the blood off their hands in the river, they proceeded to eat the soup.

"But still. Aragon said it earlier, but item boxes sure are a great thing."

Culotte muttered while eating the soup. She looked towards Rei's right hand where the Misty Ring was.

"Indeed. It's so enviable that you don't have to worry about monster corpses rotting and stuff. Moreover, you don't have to worry about being attacked by other monsters while stripping the materials from them."

"I admit that it's a handy tool, but because of that it also causes too much

trouble since people tend to aim for it."

Bolton's face appeared in Rei's mind.

By the time Bolton was arrested, the date had already changed over. In other words, that meant that the [Flame of Condemnation] that Rei use on him would take effect starting from tonight.

(...Now, will you be able to bear the pain of being burned from the inside for the sins you have committed, I wonder? Well, you won't be able to die from that pain no matter what, so you have no choice but to endure it.)

"Rei, you are showing a sinister smile, you know."

While remembering the miserable end of Bolton, who reaped what he sowed, he suddenly heard Culotte's voice.

Realizing that he smiled without noting it, Rei tried to dodge the matter and started tidying up the empty plates.

"Now, next would be Harpies. There are quite a few of them too, but not to the level of Water Monkeys so you can rest easy."

He shrewdly took out the monsters he had defeated outside the Dungeon, starting the material stripping once again.